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FLOWN.

BY EDITH DANFORTH.

Love placed a jewel in my crown,
A stone as brilliant as the day.
He called it Friendship, and it shone
For me alway.

Love burnished it, though I know not,
I thought its splendors all its own;
But now the stone is dull and dim,
For love has flown.

A WIFE'S PERIL

—OR—

THE PRICE OF HER SECRET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

"POOR HESTER!"

WHEN Captain Douglas, with pale face and trembling lips, passed out of the little anteroom, Dudley Ross returned. He would have liked to know what his errand had been, what he had had to say to his client; but she made no comment, and he did not like to ask any questions.

"I have come to resume our conversation," he said. "You have asked me what you are to do, Mrs. Blair. I have thought out a plan for you, if you will adopt it."

"I will do anything you wish," she said, drearily.

"Of course," he continued, "if the verdict had been 'Not guilty,' you could have pleased yourself; you could have gone back into the world again without fear; as it is, the safest and best thing you can do is to go away at once and forever from these scenes, and to begin another and brighter life in another part of the world."

"You are right," she said.

"I advise you to leave Ardrossan at once. Go straight to Liverpool, stop at some hotel there until the next steamer starts for America, and go there."

"Where I do not know man, woman or child!" she cried.

"My dear lady, be reasonable; the men, women, and children you know here will be but of little use to you."

"That is true," she answered, sadly.

"The first thing to be done," he said, "is to find a name for you. That of Hester Blair is known now half over the world. You can never use it again."

"I wish I had never known it," she said.

"I am sure you must do so. You see that, in order to live happily for the future, you must completely destroy your identity. Your maiden name was Carol, I believe?"

"Yes," she answered; "but I should not like to take that."

"It would hardly be safe," said Dudley Ross; "it might lead to your identification. What was your mother's maiden name?"

"Annie Malcolm," she answered.

"She has been dead many years, and was never even heard of in this neighborhood?" he continued.

"No, she is forgotten even at Firmanse," she answered.

"Then that will be the best name for you to take. Remove your wedding-ring from your finger, and begin a new life; let Hester Blair die here."

"Poor Hester Blair!" said the girl, with sad tenderness, "what has she done to deserve this? Homeless, nameless, friendless, yet she has never harmed any human being!"

"You must have an identity as well as a name," she said. "If I remember rightly, Miss Malcolm—let me be the first to call you by your adopted name—you are an excellent singer and player?"

"Yes," she answered languidly.

"Then I should call myself Miss Annie Malcolm, Professor of Music, Teacher of Singing."

"Could I teach?" she asked, doubtfully.

"Yes. If not, take a few lessons, then you will know how to give them. The thing is quickly done, you see—Hester Blair lies dead."

"Poor Hester!" sighed the girl—"happy Hester, who played on the hill-sides; dead Hester now!"

"Miss Annie Malcolm, Professor of Music, lives in her place," said the lawyer; "and it may be the will and decree of Heaven that Miss Malcolm may be as happy as Hester Blair was miserable; it is just possible. Try to think of that. Will you forgive me if I suggest just one more disguise?"

"What is it?" she asked, looking steadily at him.

"You know," he continued, "that a description of you has been published in every paper—that photographs of you have been sold by the hundred—true or false, no one knows. Fortunately, the one I saw was no more like you than it was like me. Still, it would be wise to take every precaution if you wish to avoid recognition."

"I do wish to avoid it, of course," she said.

"It is not a pleasant thing to advise a lady, but if you could manage some little personal disguise—the color of your hair, for instance."

He spoke with great hesitation, as though he hardly liked to mention it.

"Yes, I could easily do that," she replied, indifferently. "I can cut my hair short and wear some of another color; that will be a most effectual disguise."

"It seems a great pity," he said, looking with admiring eyes at the long, rich, rippling hair that was black as a raven's wing.

"It will matter but little," she said. "My father used to say that I had the loveliest hair in the wide world, now who will care if I have none?"

"You will know best what to do," he said, "but I certainly think some disguise of the kind is advisable."

"I shall not have the least hesitation in doing it," she replied.

"I should advise you," he said, "to take a cab at once and go to the station. I will go with you, so as to avoid any attention being drawn to you. I will purchase your ticket and see you safely off by the train," he added.

"You are very good," she murmured.

"Then you will go straight to the hotel. The best one for you will be the Royal Arms, in St. George's Street; I know it well, you will be very comfortable there. Your address will be Miss Annie Malcolm, Royal Arms Hotel, St. George's Street, Liverpool. Now, tell me, Miss Malcolm, shall I send to Colde Fell for all that belongs to you?"

"No," she cried, "I would not have one single thing—not a jewel—not a dress—not one thing will I have from that accursed house."

"You are quite right," he said.

"What shall I do with my wedding-ring?" she asked, looking at it as it lay in the palm of her hand.

"I will take care of it for you," he answered, impulsively. He could never afterward understand the impulse that led him to speak in that fashion. "Give it to me," he said; "I will lock it away, and if ever you want it back send to me for it."

"That will be—never," she said, simply.

By this time the crowded court was empty, and the crowds that filled the streets had dispersed. Something like its usual silence was restored to Ardrossan; the great excitement was over, and though nothing else was talked about, it was evident that the deep and intense interest would soon pass away.

When the shades of evening fell over the city, a cab was driven quickly from the assize hall to the railway station; a lady, whose face shone deadly pale through the close black veil, and a gentleman, who looked sad and anxious. No one recognized them; no one guessed that it was the heroine of the late sensational case who was driven so quickly through the streets.

"You will have a long journey," said Dudley Ross, as they stood in the railway station waiting for the train; "you will be tired enough before you reach Liverpool. You will remember the different changes; and here is your ticket."

"I feel," she said, slowly, "as though when you leave me my last hope in life has gone, and that I have lost my only friend."

She looked up at him with eyes that filled with tears—"I want you, before we part," she said, "to promise me that you will never tell anything about me, or where I am. You could say, with truth, that Hester Blair is dead."

"I can say, with even greater truth, that I do not know anything of Hester Blair, either where she is, or anything about her," he said, "and it will be quite true. Hester Blair, we have decided, no longer exists. Your secret is most perfectly safe with me. There is the train! Good-bye! and Heaven knows that I regret I did not do even better for you, although I did my best."

He helped her into the carriage, and was left on the platform alone.

On the day after Miss Malcolm quitted Ardrossan, Captain Douglas rode over to Colde Fell, making sure that the mistress of the estate would have returned there; the servants in charge knew nothing of her; they had heard that the place was to be closed; they could tell him nothing about her; they had heard nothing of her.

From there he went to Mr. Ross's office in Ardrossan, but with the same effect. Mr. Ross told him that Hester Blair had left Ardrossan soon after the trial was over, and that he knew nothing whatever of her.

With that answer, although terribly disappointed, he was forced to be content.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"THE CITY OF PEARL."

The Royal Arms was one of those quiet, sedate hotels that was always recommended to ladies and to families; a hotel where everything was well managed; where there was never any disturbance; never frequented by people who wanted to see life or to enjoy themselves, but valued for its repose, quiet attendance—its absence of all bustle and noise. On this bright June day—the twenty-eighth—the Royal Arms was almost full. There had already been some little difficulty about finding accommodation for a family just arrived from far-off Canada, when a cab drove up to the door and a lady asked if she could have rooms for three days—a beautiful woman, dressed in gray silk, with a lovely face, fair, soft, brown hair, that curled round her forehead, and lay in pretty rings about her ears. She looked very ill, and asked for quiet rooms; her voice was low and faint, as though she had for some time suffered great pain. She had no luggage with her, but said it was coming on.

"What is she like?" asked the hurried mistress of the house, of the servant who came to consult her.

"A lady, young and beautiful, but looks as though she had been very ill," was the answer.

"We can find room. Number twenty-one, and the sitting-room near it. I will manage it," said the landlady.

But there was a terrible shrinking on the part of the lady when she heard the number of her room.

"Twenty one!" she said. "Have you no other?"

"No, madame. We are so full that there has been a difficulty even in finding this," said the attendant, wearily, wondering why the lady objected to these quiet, pretty rooms; without the faintest idea why "twenty-one" had such a terrible sound to the stranger's ears.

"What will you take, madame?" was the next question. "Our house is famous for its coffee."

Again a terrible shudder came over the stranger. When should she be able to hear that one word which brought up such a crowd of horrible memories?

"No" she replies, "I will take some tea."

Tea was served, which refreshed her and did her good; she had taken nothing since she left Ardrossan; all bodily sensations were forgotten in the terrible anguish of mind. She asked for some newspapers, thinking she could find out about the steamers for New York—what they were, and when they sailed. She never dreamed that they would contain anything about her own trial; that was over, and Hester Blair was dead; but the papers were full of it. The "Times" had a leading article on the subject, questioning the wisdom of such a verdict. One of the London papers contained a supposed story of her life; the Liverpool paper contained a full summary of her case, and the bearing of the article was all against her. She read it with despairing eyes, yet what could it matter? Hester Blair was dead. Her heart ached until the pain almost killed her.

It was a strange hour for her. She knew nothing of the illness that was hanging over her—of the fire that was already beginning to make terrible havoc in her brain. The letters seemed to swim before her eyes—the pictures in the Liverpool paper of the steamers about to sail all seemed suddenly living.

"My trouble has driven me mad," she said to herself.

Then she tried quietly to find out about the steamers, but could not. She could not read or understand. "I must leave it until morning," she thought. She slept heavily all night, dreaming always that she was back in that crowded court, waiting for the verdict.

She woke in the morning, after that heavy stupor of sleep, unfreshed, but the clearness of her senses had some measure returned. She found, on looking at the papers, that a steamer called "The City of Pearl" sailed on the first of July for New York. The time suited her, and she liked the name. She would have nearly three days in which to purchase her outfit and make everything ready for the voyage.

On that day she went to the office and purchased her ticket, a first-class one, for the idea of any other was not pleasant. Her name was enrolled in the list of passengers, "Miss Malcolm, Professor of Music." She stopped for some few minutes in the office, talking of the probable length of the voyage, then went into a stationer's shop to write to Mr. Ross.

"I have bought my ticket," she wrote, "and we sail on the first of July. The steamer is a first-class one, and is called

'The City of Pearl.'" And when Dudley Ross read that letter, he felt that he had heard the last of Hester Blair.

As she made her purchases, they were sent one after the other to her hotel. One large box, addressed, "Miss Annie Malcolm, Passenger to New York, per 'The City of Pearl,'" was sent straight to the steamer, the rest were sent to her address at the hotel.

On the last day of June she drove down to the steamer to see if anything had been forgotten. The steamer sailed on the morrow, and if she had forgotten anything it must be procured to-night. She had said nothing to the people at the hotel of where she was going; she intended, on the morning of the first of July, to take a cab from the hotel to the docks.

It was a warm night, this last in June; there was little air, and she felt very ill. She went out, having one or two purchases to make. She went first into a book-seller's shop to purchase a few books; the master of the shop stood behind the counter, and two gentlemen stood talking near the door. She had not been there one minute before she heard the sound of her own name, and then she turned eagerly round—"Hester Blair," and then she remembered that Hester Blair was dead. It was her case they were discussing; one believed in her guilt, one in her innocence.

"That woman was a murderess as sure as Heaven is above us," said one; and the other replied that she was as innocent as a child.

Dazed and sick at heart, she made her purchases and hastened back to the hotel. The horror of it all seemed to accumulate; when she reached her room she fell with her face on the ground, and was found there some hours later by one of the attendants.

The next morning she was in the throes of a terrible fever. She lay for many days between life and death, and "The City of Pearl," with her name on the passenger-list, set sail without her.

Everyone in England remembers the horrible fate of "The City of Pearl"—how she came into collision with the "Royal Albert"—and sunk almost at once, with the whole of her crew and passengers; hardly one was left living to tell the tale.

The news filled all England with distress and dismay. Perhaps no one felt more grieved than Mr. Ross. He opened the paper in his office the morning after the wreck; the first thing he read was:

"Terrible accident at sea! Loss of the steamer 'The City of Pearl,' with all on board!" and then, looking at his clerk, who stood near, he said to him:

"You remember Mrs. Blair, Adam?"

"I do, sir," was the answer given with a white, startled face.

"She sailed in 'The City of Pearl' under the name of Miss Anna Malcolm, and her name is in the list of the drowned."

He wondered why the clerk went about all day with a face like that of a dead man.

One of the first things that the hapless lady read when she began to recover, was the story of the loss of "The City of Pearl," and her own name amongst the list of the drowned.

"I am doubly dead," she said to herself. "Hester Blair died at Ardrossan, Annie Malcolm was drowned in the sea. No one shall know my secret, and the world shall believe me dead!"

CHAPTER XIX.

MISS ALICE KENT.

FIVE YEARS have passed since the terrible tragedy of Colde Fell had aroused the attention of all England and Scotland. Other tragedies had happened since then, other murders, other trials, but this one had kept its hold upon the public, on account of the mystery that still surrounded it. Had the verdict been decisive, the interest might have died, but the question was still unanswered—"Who did the deed?"

Every now and then the Mystery of Colde Fell would be discussed. It was always referred to other cases of poisoning; it was often mentioned when a trial was unusually difficult on account of the equal balance of evidence. Another circumstance that made people remember it was the unhappy fate of its heroine.

Dudley Ross would have kept her secret forever, but her supposed death made it impossible. Colde Fell, with its handsome revenues, which during her life-time at least would have remained untouched, must now go to the next of kin, and the next of kin in this case was a very distant relative, by name Marcus Adair, who had hardly heard the name of "Blair," or of Colde Fell, and who had not the faintest idea of ever hearing about it; and what was perhaps more wonderful, he did not know what to do with the fortune when he had it.

It was owing to the fact that search had to be made for the heir of Colde Fell that public attention was drawn to Hester Blair's supposed death.

The papers and journals held high revel. Here was an end to the sensational drama of the day. The heroine of it leaves England in disguise, and is drowned at sea. Sensational paragraphs filled the papers. "Terrible ending of the Mystery of Colde Fell." And they told how beautiful young Hester Blair had made a desperate attempt to escape from the Old World to begin a fresh life in the New; how she had sailed in that unfortunate steamer "The City of Pearl," under the name of Miss Annie Malcolm, and had been drowned at sea.

The news produced a profound sensation. It was a nine days' wonder at Ardrossan and Athole, where it was discussed by those who knew her with tears. No one felt it more keenly than Sir Alan Fletcher, who had always been her friend, and who believed in her innocence, though he could not fathom the mystery. Captain Douglas did not long remain in the neighborhood; he seemed a perfectly heart-broken man.

Then after a time the sensation died away; Hester Blair drowned and dead became a memory.

It was the strangest sensation for her, as she recovered, to read all these things about herself. She read how she set sail; how she was drowned; and what the world had to say about her.

She smiled to herself bitterly, yet with a grim sense of amusement.

"It is not every one," she said, "who can know what the world has to say of them after death. I have this privilege, and I find that no one has a good word to say of me—not one!"

At this busy hotel little had been thought of the ship-wreck. No one ever thought that there was any connection between the young lady whose name was hardly known, and who lay so dangerously ill, and Miss Annie Malcolm, drowned when "The City of Pearl" was wrecked. When the doctor who was called in to attend her saw how very ill she was, he sent for a professional nurse. There was no contagion in the fever—it was simply one of nervous exhaustion—and with care she soon recovered; but it was the strangest thing to read, as she did, of her own death.

When she had quite recovered, she quitted the hotel, after handsomely paying doctors and nurse, and liberally feeing the servants; no one had the faintest suspicion of her identity—her secret was safe.

She went right away at once to a quiet little hamlet lying amidst the English lakes, where she could find perfect rest, bracing air, and solitude—the three things above all others that she required. She would not think about the future; she would not decide for herself what she should do, or where she should go. She would not think; she would content herself by spending the whole day in the fresh air, and trying to sleep well at night. Even that life, without a friend, without an interest, would be beautiful after her experience of the prison at Athole.

"Fresh air, light and sunshine; I ought to be happy with them."

She would not use the name of "Annie Malcolm" again. She said to herself that, beloved as it was for her mother's sake, it had not been a fortunate one for her.

"I wonder," she said to herself, sadly, "if ever one woman had so many names in so short a time before? I have been Hester Carol, Hester Blair, Annie Malcolm—what name shall I put on my boxes now. I will choose one that is quite English without a touch of Scotch. I will be Alice Kent."

She wrote the name on the luggage tickets, and smiled bitterly when she saw it.

"I hope," she said to herself, "that Alice Kent may be happier than her predecessors."

Then she went alone to the place she had chosen amongst the English lakes; a pretty little village called Greystone, where she remained for a whole year, where she recovered her health, her strength, and her wonderful beauty.

There was no longer any need to wear a fair-haired disguise; Annie Malcolm who had worn it was drowned in the sea.

When the year expired she began to think what she should do with the remainder of her life—how she should spend it, what she should work at, what she should do? She never dreamed of love or marriage—her only thought was to spend the remainder of her life at rest, far away from all the burning, shameful memories of Hester Blair.

From the English lakes she decided to go to Paris—the best place to be lost in is a great city; she would go there, and give lessons in English. Her money would last her until she had made a connection, and then she would make no further effort in life.

She went to Paris, and had her address cards printed there—

"MISS ALICE KENT.
Teacher of English and Music,
15 Rue de Saint Jean,"

and there in time she had a good number of pupils.

CHAPTER XX.

A SPOILED CHILD.

IN all Paris there was no family more respected or held in higher esteem than that of Saint Luce. They came of an ancient, honorable race; their ancestors had fought amongst the crusaders of France. In the old Royalist days, when the lilies of France were blazoned on every field, none had carried them more proudly than the Saint Luces.

They had survived all the tempests that have at different times wrecked the fair land of France, but it had been with difficulty; and in these, the days of the Republic, they lived quietly, and took no share in the political changes and controversies that make that marvelous country a wonder to the whole world. They had lost much property and much money, but they were still reckoned amongst the wealthy of the land. Louis de Saint Luce, the present head of the family, had married young. His wife was half English; her father was a French nobleman, her mother an English lady, and although she was born and had lived always in France, Mme. de Saint Luce had some strong English characteristics which her daughter inherited. Claire Saint Luce had all the Saxon honesty and bluntness of speech that no amount of French training could cover or hide. She had the grand old Saxon love of truth and plain-speaking, and with it the French nerve, animation and wit.

No need to say that she was a spoiled child or heiress to immense wealth; beautiful, graceful, witty, with the charm of English sincerity and French polish, she was one of the most fascinating girls that could be met. She was only sixteen, and up to the present time had been kept in rigorous seclusion. Mme. de Saint Luce expected her daughter to make one of the most brilliant marriages in France, and she was not to be seen by common eyes.

The family estate of the Saint Luces lay on the beautiful and picturesque coast of Britanny, and was called "Les Fountains," from the numerous and magnificent fountains that surrounded it, each one of which had a legend and a history.

An old picturesque castle that had every charm; it was surrounded by deep green woods and forests, while to the south lay the blue deep sea. All the poetry that lies on sea and land finds a home on the coast of Brittany; the wild foaming seas, the tall, steep cliffs, the huge caverns where the great billows roar, the fantastic caves, the ruined shrines, the quaint villages where old legends linger; and Les Fountaines itself was a poem. The house in Paris, overlooking the then superb garden of the Tuileries, was one of the most magnificent in the vast city. It would be idle to speak of the luxuries belonging to the Saint Luces, of madame's jewels and monsieur's horses; of the carriages; the superb old plate, the numerous retinue of servants; the magnificent toilets of madame; the grand balls and parties given, at which the beautiful young daughter of the house never appeared.

Nothing else in the wide world was refused to her, but this entree into society. She was in every sense of the word a spoiled child, but she bore the spoiling wonderfully well.

She was not quite twelve when the lines of her life crossed with those of Alice Kent. Her beauty was quite of an extraordinary kind. She was like no one else. She had dark Spanish eyes and fair English hair. She had French grace of manner, and a fair English complexion—real English roses and lilies artistically blended, a bright sunny English smile and a sweet subtle French manner of expressing herself that was wonderfully amusing.

She went one day with Mme. Saint Luce to call upon a distant relative of hers—Mme. de Lornay—a lady who had certainly the prettiest family of children in Paris, and who was very proud of showing them.

"My children are just at their English lessons," said Mme. de Lornay; "would you like to see them?"

An animated answer, full of delight, from Claire, and an amiable response from madame, and the whole party went to the room where the children received English lessons. On their way Mme. de Lornay said:

"I have been most fortunate in securing an excellent English teacher."

"Who is she?" inquired Mme. Saint Luce.

Mme. de Lornay laughed.

"My children say that she is an angel, and must have come straight from Paradise; I find her a very beautiful Englishwoman, who comes from the Rue Saint Jean." With these words madame opened the door of a square room, where, at a round table, sat the prettiest group of children imaginable. But it was not on them that the eyes of the visitors were fixed; the magnificently beautiful woman amongst them absorbed all attention. Even Mme. Saint Luce admitted to herself that she had seen nothing one-half so lovely or peerless before.

Seeing the admiration that the beautiful English teacher had aroused in her visitors, Mme. de Lornay introduced her in a few words.

"She might be an empress," thought Claire, who, with her usual enthusiasm, had fallen in love with her at once.

She went to her and tried to engage her in conversation; but after looking at her once with those beautiful blue eyes—a comprehensive glance which seemed to take in her whole appearance and character—Miss Kent gently avoided saying more.

But Claire was not to be baffled.

"How beautiful you speak English, Miss Kent," she said. "People may say what they will about the superiority of French and Italian, I think there is no language in the world more sweet, full and musical than English when it is well spoken."

"I quite agree with you," replied Miss Kent.

Mme. Saint Luce smiled.

"You are too young to judge," she said.

"I think the young are very good judges, mamma," she replied. "It is the music teaches us, and the sense teaches our elders. Miss Kent," she continued, "I wish you would teach me English."

"My dear Claire," said Mme. Saint Luce, "I am sure that you speak English very well."

"Not so well as I should like to do, mamma. You know that you laugh yourself at my accent."

"My own is not much better," laughed madame, "although I am one degree more English than you, Claire."

"Miss Kent," continued the spoiled beauty and heiress, "will you teach me?"

Miss Kent hesitated one half-minute; she had no idea that the great crisis of her life had arrived; that she stood face to face with her future more fully than she had ever done before. Since she had been in Paris she had most carefully avoided any collusion with the English. If English parents applied to her, she always declined lessons for their children—she would not run the least risk. She had never spoken one word to English man, woman, or child since she had lived in Paris.

She half hesitated now, but who can resist when the finger of Fate points the way? Then she thought to herself, "These are, after all, French people, they never go to England; they have probably no English relative, and even if they have I shall never see them." She would be quite sure to receive excellent compensation, and money was not too plentiful. Then there was the lovely, pleading face of Claire Saint Luce, the kindly smile of madame, the affectionate interest of Mme. de Lornay.

"Let me add my persuation to that of my daughter," said Mme. Saint Luce, who had never refused to gratify one of her daughter's wishes.

"Let me add mine," said Mme. de Lornay with a smile, and Miss Kent could but comply.

How can any one resist that pointing of the finger of Fate? She did not: but she went with Mme. Saint Luce into another room, there to arrange for lessons and terms. The terms offered for one hour's English teaching every day perfectly astonished her. They were so good as to enable her almost to do without anything else.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FINGER OF FATE

THREE weeks had passed since the finger of Fate had beckoned Alice Kent, and she had unconsciously followed its bent.

Mme. Saint Luce shared her daughter's enthusiasm over the beautiful English teacher, and even monsieur, who was as a rule superbly indifferent to the loves of his wife and daughter, admired her exceedingly.

The time came when Claire was no longer content with the daily hour of teaching, when she wanted Alice Kent all to herself.

"Mamma," she said, "I can never tire of asking you favors, for you never tire of granting them."

"Anything to make you happy, Claire. What is the particular favor wanted now?"

"Mamma," cried the girl, warmly, "I have never loved any one in my life, except you and papa, so much as I love Miss Kent. There is one thing that would make me perfectly happy, and that is if she could live with us, to be my companion and elder sister. It is lonely to be an only child. Let her come and live with us."

"That is rather a startling proposal, Claire," said Mme. de St. Luce.

"A very sensible one, mamma. I have never complained, and never should, but it will be a year at least before I make my debut. Papa and you go out a great deal, and then I do feel rather lonely, and long at times for an older sister. Miss Kent would be the best of all companions for me."

"But, my dear Claire, it is a very serious question: it is taking a stranger into the very heart of our home, it is almost adopting another member of the family."

"It need not be quite so serious as that. In this great palace of ours there is room, surely, for one more inhabitant. Give Miss Kent those three lovely rooms that overlook the orange court; she could keep them for her own exclusive use. She need never intrude on you or on your visitors, and it would be charming for me."

The notion of anything that was charming to her daughter proved irresistible to Mme. Saint Luce. She would not promise without consideration, but Claire knew that her point was gained when madame said she would think of it. Madame did think of it. Devoted as she was to her daughter, she was, nevertheless, proud of her position as one of the most brilliant queens of fashion. Madame had a court of her own; she had her own especial friends and admirers. There had been times when she had hesitated between the duty that led her to devote time and attention to her daughter, and the love of enjoyment which led her to devote herself to the pleasures and gayeties always open to her. If Miss Kent lived with them as companion, she would feel greater freedom and ease.

Then, too, Miss Kent was a most beautiful woman, who would be a great ornament to their household. Beautiful, graceful, clever, accomplished; surely there were great advantages to be gained by such an addition to their circle. But, then, Miss Kent was quite a stranger to them; they knew nothing of her, except that she was very beautiful, graceful, and accomplished.

"She must be a lady," said madame to herself; "she could not be anything else, with that refined face and manner; still, I should like to know more about her before I ask her to become an inmate of our household, I should like references, and those, of course, she will be able to give."

But when Mme. Saint Luce sent for her, and laid her proposition before her, Miss Kent did not listen with any enthusiasm.

Of course it was a magnificent offer—a suite of rooms, in what was like a palace, a good income, nothing to do but make herself agreeable and amiable to a lovely young girl who worshipped her. No more dingy lodgings, no more privations, no more weary seeking after lessons; the drudgery of her life would be ended, for Mme. Saint Luce had hinted that if everything was satisfactory Miss Kent might continue to live with her after her daughter was married. The very thought of it was like a haven of rest.

But there sat madame, handsome and smiling, with the air of one who knows that she is conferring a great kindness, and madame was saying:

"Of course you will understand, Miss Kent, that it is merely a matter of form that I ask for references;" and the beautiful Englishwoman looked blankly at her.

References! The very word was a cruel satire! Yet how could she, who knew the world, look in the face of this other woman who knew the world, and tell her that she had none to give? She made some hesitating remark to the effect that she had never before occupied such a position, and was by no means sure how she should fulfill it.

"Most ably and most happily," smiled madame; "I am quite sure of that."

Then Miss Kent said, gently:

"I do not think it will be possible for me, Madame Saint Luce, to give you any references. My parents are dead, and I have no relatives. I have not kept up any correspondence with any English friends. I am quite alone in the world, and to speak honestly, I do not think any one in the wide world has sufficient interest in me to answer any references."

The two ladies looked at each other in silence. It is always, and under all circumstances, an awkward thing to own to the cruel fact of no references."

"Of course," continued Miss Kent, "if Parisian references will avail, I can give you plenty. I have been well known here as an English teacher for five years."

The handsome face of Mme. Saint Luce cleared.

"That will be quite sufficient," she said. "I can easily understand that after such a long absence your English friends will have lost sight of you."

And so the matter ended. Mme. Saint Luce was well content, although there was no doubt she would have been better pleased had Miss Kent referred her to some good English families.

The Parisian references were found perfectly satisfactory, and Alice Kent left the dingy lodgings and the wearisome round of lessons for a life of ease and luxury.

Mme. Saint Luce and Mlle. Claire gave her the warmest and kindest of welcomes. It was almost like coming home.

She could hardly believe that those three beautiful rooms overlooking the orange court were for her. The first was a sitting room, with flowers, books, and pictures; the second a sleeping-room; the third a bath-room.

"They can not be for me!" cried Alice Kent, to whom luxury and comfort were strangers. "They are too good and too beautiful."

"Nothing could be good enough for you," cried Claire; and Alice Kent turned to her with a grateful little cry.

"I owe this and everything else to your love for me," she said; but no warning came to her of the strange fate that was to find her there!

CHAPTER XXII.

A SUMMER SEA.

THE change from a dark, raging ocean to a lovely summer sea could not be greater than the change in Alice Kent's life. She had suffered all the privations that come from hard work and want of money, and now she lived in the midst of luxury—in an atmosphere of warmth and fragrance; the palatial mansion, the numerous works of art, the pictures, the statues, the fountains, and the flowers, the number of well-trained servants, the luxurious carriages, the fine stud of horses were all delightful. She, who had lived on the poorest of fare, now had at her command the most recherche of fruits, the most costly of wines, agreeable and amiable to the girl who loved her so dearly.

In the afternoon there were long drives or walks. Neither Claire nor Miss Kent ever dined with the family, as visitors were always present; but the evenings were delightful with music and books. Miss Kent soon became an established favorite with the whole household; for her gentleness more than her beauty the servants all worshipped her. In all that vast mansion no one was better served than she, while the enthusiastic love of the young heiress increased day by day.

So a whole year passed; six had elapsed now since the mystery of Colde Fell had bewildered and puzzled a nation. In the magnificently beautiful woman called Alice Kent no one would have recognized its heroine. One year in the midst of splendor, fashion, and luxury, seemed to have changed her completely. She had grown superbly lovely; the lines that pain, anguish, and despair had drawn on her face had all disappeared; the sadness that had clouded her brilliancy had vanished; there were times when it returned faintly, and with the fragile, lingering tenderness of a moonbeam on a deep lake.

She had acquired a grace of carriage, a softness and distinction of manner, that made her irresistibly charming; indeed, no one could live with Mme. Saint Luce without in some measure resembling her. Her face had gained in loveliness, her figure in grace and symmetry. She had always been beautiful, as a child, a girl, and a woman, but now she would have been distinguished amongst thousands.

The inquiries made about her after she had been seen out with madame or Claire were endless.

"Who was that beautiful English lady driving with you in the Bois de Boulogne, madame?" was the constant cry.

And madame answered always.

"A great friend and companion of my daughter's." To all prayers for an introduction she gave the same reply: "The lady can not be induced to go into society. I could not act contrary to her wish."

"Of course, my dear Miss Kent," said madame, "you have chosen your way, and doubtless you will keep to it; but it seems a sad pity, with your face and figure. If you would only mix a little in society, you would make one of the best matches in Paris."

The beautiful eyes turned to her in wonder and dismay, and the beautiful lips lost some of their rich color.

"Do you mean that I should marry, madame?" she asked.

"Yes, most certainly. Frenchmen all go mad over a beautiful English face, and you have one, if ever woman had. You might marry a peer, if you would."

She shrunk back, pale and trembling.

"I shall never marry, madame," she said; and madame laughed heartily.

"Many girls say that, Miss Kent; and, as a rule, they end by making a good match, and become very happy wives. You will do the same."

But Alice Kent said to herself that that would never be—that love and marriage would never be for her; and even while she owned it to herself she saw, as in a glimpse, what might have been—what grand possibilities of happiness she had lost—what her life might have been but for this horrible Mystery of Colde Fell.

Saw it, and turned away sick at heart. Life was over for her; and Mme. Saint Luce wondered. She said to herself that Alice Kent must have been disappointed in love in her early girlhood; none the less deeply deplored it.

Peaceful and happy as her life was, filled with every luxury and comfort, raging tempests crept into it. One morning, during the dejeuner, the conversation turned to the weird and extraordinary story of Bulwer's entitled "Lucretia; or, the Children of Night," and M. Saint Luce expressed very strongly his dislike and disapprobation of it.

"I do not and never will believe so badly of human nature," he said. "I can hardly bring myself to believe that, except in cases of impulsive and impetuous violence, or hot-blooded anger—I can not believe that one human being could deliberately bring himself to take away the life of another. I must say that to me the secret poisoner is a marvel in nature. I can understand the man who in the heat of anger raises his hand against another, but I can not understand how any one can deliberately plan a death and watch the torture and the agony without relenting. There is something fiendish to me in the crime of poisoning. What do you say, Miss Kent?"

Miss Kent was deathly pale; the hand that held the wine-glass trembled so that she replaced it hastily on the table.

"I quite agree with you, monsieur," she said.

Mme. Saint Luce gave it as her opinion that secret poisoning was more practiced than the world suspected.

"I remember," she continued, "many cases that have interested me very much—English cases especially. You remember the one of the doctor who poisoned his wife so scientifically that even the most clever experts disagreed, and few people could decide whether he was guilty or not, until he made his confession."

"I remember that," said monsieur.

"Then there was another terrible case," said madame. "If I remember rightly, that was also a surgeon who poisoned not only his wife and his friend, but many relatives besides."

"That was a terrible case," replied monsieur; "certainly the English poisoning cases rank amongst the most terrible."

Paler and paler grew the beautiful face. It was only by a desperate effort that she refrained from crying out. A red mist seemed to swim before her eyes; a roar as of many waters was in her ears. If they would but speak of something else, the strain on her mind was so great

"I do not think that secret poison is at all an English kind of crime," said monsieur; "it belongs rather to the Italians."

"The most dreadful case I remember was in Scotland, not in England," said Mme. Saint Luce. "I do not know if you remember it, Louis; a young wife—quite a girl she was—and a very beautiful one, too. She was accused of poisoning her husband. It came out in the trial that she never loved him. There was great excitement over it."

"I do not remember," said monsieur, slowly; "yet I read all the English papers. How long is it since it happened?"

"Five, or six, or seven years," answered madame. "I do not know exactly, but you must remember it, Louis. I think one half of the world was excited and interested over that case. It had such a strange ending. We looked for the English papers with as much interest in those days as we did while the Tichborne trial lasted. The ending of it disappointed us, and gave no satisfaction to any one, I should say, not even to the accused herself."

"What was it?" inquired monsieur, with some interest.

"It was the old Scotch verdict, that means neither one thing nor another," replied madame. "It was neither found 'guilty' nor 'acquitted'—simply, 'not proven.'"

"A merciful verdict at times," answered monsieur, "but I remember nothing of the case, Eugene."

"You have forgotten it. It was called 'The Mystery of Colde Fell.'"

There was a sudden start—the fall of a glass—and Alice Kent fell back swooning in the chair.

It was the heat, or the fruit, or the odor of the flowers, they all said. Who was to guess that the unhappy heroine of "The Mystery of Colde Fell" was before them?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

GONE TO POT.—The origin of the phrase "Gone to pot," has been traced to an old story about a tailor of Samarcand, who lived near the gate of the city on the road leading to the cemetery. It is said that this knight of the shears had outside his cottage an earthenware pot, into which he dropped a pebble for every corpse that passed by, and at the end of each moon counted the number. At length the tailor himself died, and his neighbors remarked, "Poor fellow, he now is gone to pot also."

PAINTING.—It is said that the smallest piece of painting in the world has recently been executed by a Flemish artist. It is painted on the smooth side of a grain of common white corn, and pictures a mill and a miller mounting a stairs with a sack of grain on his back. The mill is represented as standing on a terrace, and near it is a horse and cart, while a group of several peasants are shown in the road near by. The picture is beautifully distinct, every object being finished with microscopic fidelity, yet by careful measurement it is shown that the whole painting does not cover a surface of half an inch square.

SAVED BY A DOG AND DRUM.—In 1776 a ship was wrecked on the south coast of England, not far from Portsmouth. Fortunately, owing to the sharp wits of one of the sailors, all souls were saved. He got a drum that happened to be on board, repaired its defects so as to make it quite watertight, then fastened a rope to it securely, and tied the whole round a dog. Next he let the dog into the sea, and the noble animal succeeded in reaching the land. There some on-lookers seized the drum and hauled in the rope. By now a much stronger rope had been tied to the end of the first one, and by its means passengers and crew were gradually drawn ashore.

CLOCKS.—As early as the beginning of the ninth century (A. D. 807), a very remarkable clock was presented by the King of Persia to Charlemagne. The machinery of the time-piece provided that at the stroke of the hour a door opened and a portly cavalcade of knights and chargers issued forth, passed along the little platform provided in the mechanism, and entered by another door, returning to their places. Later in the same century the Archdeacon of Verona, Pacificus, devoted himself very much to the science and manufactures of time-pieces; but, notwithstanding his labors, we find that the monks of the tenth century were still indebted to the cock-crowing for waking them up in the morning. In the thirteenth century Dante speaks familiarly of clocks that struck the hours. Indeed, in that very century the first turret clock in England was erected, in the Tower of Westminster, during the reign of Edward I., which did its duty better and longer than its more pretentious successor, Big Ben, who very soon came to grief after his accession to office.

OYSTER-SHELLED.—For some two hundred years a curious custom prevailed in ancient Athens, whereby a citizen might, although not a criminal, and perhaps indeed an upright man, be banished from the State for a period fixed at first at ten years, but, later, reduced to five. Every year the people were asked whether they wished to exercise this power. If they wished to do so, they had to write the name of the man whom they wanted to exile upon an oyster-shell, or piece of earthenware, and if six thousand "votes" were given to any one person, he had to leave Athens forthwith. This custom, which was known as "ostracism" from the Greek word ostrakon, a piece of earthenware, was abolished about five hundred years before Christ. That the power was open to abuse was proved by the famous case of Aristides the Just, who was thus ostracised at the instigation of Themistocles, who regarded him as a dangerous rival. The story goes that a poor man who could not write, meeting Aristides, asked him to write the name of Aristides upon his shell. "But," asked Aristides, "what wrong has he done you?" "I know nothing about him," was the reply, "but I'm sick of hearing him called the Just." When the Persians threatened Athens, Aristides returned from exile to fight for his country.

LONGINGS.

BY W. W. LONG.

There comes to me here in the restless town,
A dream of days of rest,
Where low winds sigh 'mid the pilling leaves
That drift to the streamlet's breast.

I am tired of the din of the city's streets,
The clatter of shut and this;
Oh, for the smell of the mountain pines,
And the touch of nature's kiss.

Oh, for the meadows green and cool,
And upland, dale and dell,
Where birds through all the happy day,
To the flowers their melody tell.

Oh, for the past with you, beloved,
The past with its golden days,
Ere doubt crept in our lives between,
And doomed us to separate ways.

BY UNSEEN HANDS

—OR—

WHAT WAS THE MYSTERY?

BY WYNNE WYNTERS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MARIE DE FEURGET'S CONFIDENCES.

I AM dull, hatefully, miserably, wretchedly dull. There's a confession to start with! Away from the convent, really in the outside world of which we girls used to talk so much, and—dull! Once I should have laughed at the very idea, and laughed more than ever at the idea of being driven to write down all my thoughts in this silly school-girl fashion. I wish I were back at the convent! I wish I were anywhere but here. And yet I dare not tell mon pere so, for it would make him very unhappy—very angry, too, I expect. He would call me ingrate, undutiful, mechant. Ah! I know exactly what he would say. I suppose he is fond of me, too. He must be. He buys me pretty things and he is always bidding me amuse myself. But how can I, when I am always alone? He is so fond of solitude himself that I suppose he thinks it is best for every one else, too; but it so dull. He takes me out—never. I have not a single friend—not one; and not even an acquaintance of the other sex. Annette tells me that they call him the misanthrope in the village. It is very disagreeable to have a father who is a misanthrope.

I wonder whether he has really any great trouble. Sometimes I think that it must be so, and then I feel very sorry for him. I thought so when we came back from that awful visit to England! What a terrible time that was! Those poky little lodgings, that awful funeral we went to, and his strange manner all the time! It makes me shudder to think of it all. And why should we have changed our name while we were there, too? Ah! it was all very odd; but there was one thing about it which I shall never forget.

Ah, well; you have one advantage, you great untidy note-book—though you're a queer sort of companion you won't tell tales, and I can confess to you what I wouldn't even whisper to any one in the world, not even to Annette; for though she is a very good girl she is a dreadful gossip.

I would like, oh, so much, to see him just once more. I wonder if he has even thought of me at all? I don't suppose so. He is a great noble, mon pere says, and we are—well, nobody very much. I wish that we were different, that everything was different.

How I wish that we were of his order, and could go somewhere—to a great dance, or a reception, and meet him unexpectedly, and he would be so surprised, and—but this is awfully silly. I mustn't write any more nonsense like this, or I shall begin to be ashamed of myself and close you up forever, my silent confidant.

Of course he has forgotten all about me by this time. Of course he has. And yet I wonder whether he has quite? He must see so many girls ever so much nicer than I am, and they must all like him. Ah me, how dull I am; and what a dreary world this is! I wish that I could think of something fresh to do, or that something would happen; I wouldn't mind much what. Of course it won't, though. I think I'll go to bed, and get up and see the sun rise. Good-night, you stupid old book!

* * * * * *

Last night I was praying for a change of any sort. Well, it has come; and, slight though it is, I am glad of it. Sometimes mon pere seems to weary of his dull, learned books, and his long, lonely walks and visits to his sick pensioners, and then he goes off down into the little town, and into the casino reading-room, never stopping there very long and seldom noticing or speaking to any of the strangers there. This week he has been twice—a very rare occurrence; and this afternoon, on his return, he called me to him and told me briefly that he had invited guests to dinner and that he should expect me to receive them. There were no ladies, he said, only gentlemen; but of course I knew this, for he could scarcely have asked ladies to dine here, even had he known any, without their having called on me first. He was going away to his study without telling me any more, but I coaxed him into having tea with me on the balcony, and then he told me all about it.

"You are a very curious young person, Marie," he said, "but I suppose you won't rest till I've told you all about it. When I was at the casino on Monday there was a very nice English boy there with his tutor. I don't know why, but I took rather a fancy to him, and as we were at the same table we talked together for some time. Of course he told me all about himself—an Englishman always does that. It seems that his name is Carlyon, and he is supposed to be reading for an examination with a tutor, who is traveling with him. The tutor is a stupid, careless sort of fellow, who has never been out of England before, and is about the last person in the world to have the charge of a high-spirited lad like Carlyon, who seems just one of those boys who are born to get into mischief. I remember thinking something of the sort when I left them on Monday, and to-day I find that I was right. There is a fellow named D'Aubron always hanging about the casino—a very pleasant, gentlemanly fellow on the surface, but in reality an adventurer, a card-sharper—in short, a blackguard. It seems that he has managed to ingratiate himself somehow with both Carlyon and his tutor, and unless some one manages to put a stop to it the result is very obvious. I heard D'Aubron ask young Carlyon to dine with him this evening, and while he was hesitating I asked them all to dine with me instead. It was the only thing I could think of at that moment. Carlyon accepted at once, and so, I am sorry to say, did D'Aubron. That is the history of our dinner-party."

"But how about the dinner?" I asked, for though our cook was a good one, I doubted whether she would be prepared at so short a notice.

"I have seen to that," he said, rising. "I am going into the library now. Do not forget that dinner is at eight o'clock."

I was a little later, because Annette would insist upon so many finishing touches, and when I reached the drawing-room I found that they had arrived and were waiting for me to go into dinner. I was rather shy when I opened the door, but mon pere came to me at once and gave me his arm. Then he took me up and introduced me to our guests.

I was introduced to each separately, first to Mr. Carlyon. He bowed awkwardly and blushed like a school-girl, but I liked him better than any of the rest. He was quite tall, and had such a bright, open face with blue eyes and brown curly hair. He was just what I had expected, only nicer. Then there was M. d'Aubron. He was a tall, sallow young man, with black moustache and eyes, and rather prominent teeth. I didn't like him at all. He looked at me coldly, and yet familiarly, and bowed so low that I thought he must be going to kiss my fingers or do something absurd.

And he made such a ridiculous little speech, too, about the unexpected pleasure, and all that sort of nonsense. I took care to pretend not to hear it, and I turned my back upon him as soon as I could.

Mr. Brown, Mr. Carlyon's tutor, was the last one of the three to whom I was introduced. He was rather a young looking man with red hair and whiskers, large spectacles and a very feeble expression. He didn't look at all the man likely to have any authority over any one—least of all over a high-spirited boy like Arthur Carlyon.

Very soon after my arrival a strange man-servant—we only kept three maids at the villa, so he must have been engaged specially—announced that dinner was served. Mon pere asked Mr. Carlyon to take me in, and the poor boy did blush so when he gave me his arm. I was glad it was he, though, for I felt that I should like him. When we reached the dining-room—a room which we scarcely ever used—I had quite a surprise. There was some new furniture, and the table was beautifully decorated with silver and glass and choice flowers. The conservatory, which had been empty ever since we had been at the villa, was filled with palms and exotics. Then there were two men-servants to wait at table, and from the many dainty courses I knew that there must be a strange cook downstairs. I tried to look quite dignified, as though I were quite used to it all, but I'm afraid I wasn't very successful.

There was plenty of conversation during dinner-time. Mr. Carlyon soon found his tongue, and amused me very much. My father and Mr. Brown started a literary conversation. M. d'Aubron alone remained almost silent, and paid attention to his dinner. Several times my father reluctantly broke off his conversation with Mr. Brown and spoke courteously to him, but the result was always the same. M. d'Aubron was evidently sulking. At last, mon pere left him alone, and I was glad of it. How I did dislike that man! I positively hated him. I knew that he was a bad man.

Now and then I found myself watching my father, partly in wonder, partly in admiration. It was hard to believe that this was the same man whose morose moods and gloomy, troubled looks had been such a dead weight upon my happiness. He was an admirable host. It did me good to look at him.

As soon as it seemed to me that the proper time had come I rose and left them to their wine. Mr. Carlyon, being nearest, opened the door for me, and in his hurry managed to tread upon my skirts and tear them badly. Then I went into the drawing-room, and Annette came and did the best she could with some pins, for I did not feel like changing my dress.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A MONOTONY BROKEN.

I DON'T think I ever felt more restless than I did that evening. I couldn't work, I couldn't read, I couldn't even play. At last I opened the French window and went out on the balcony.

It was a lovely night, such a night as only we dwellers in southern lands are permitted to enjoy. Through the dark boughs of the silent trees I could catch faint flashes of the sea, glistening like a silver lake in the light of the yellow moon, and away in front of me the black hills stretched their dim, cloud-betopped heads toward the sky.

The sound of some one entering the drawing-room behind disturbed me, and I looked in through the half-open window. Mr. Carlyon was there, standing just inside the doorway with his hands in his trousers pockets, and glancing around with a very disconsolate expression.

Evidently he had come to look for me, and was disappointed—very disappointed he appeared—to find the room empty. He was in the act of quitting the room when I entered it, and I had to call him back. He turned round and came toward me at once, with a pleased smile on his handsome, boyish face.

"Hope I'm not disturbing you, Mlle. de Feurget," he said, apologetically. "You see, your father and old Brown—my tutor, you know—are deep in a discussion on Rousseau, and D'Aubron is as sulky as a bear about something or other, and, you see——"

I stopped him, laughing.

"You needn't make so many excuses for coming in to talk to me," I said. "It isn't complimentary. I'm very glad to have you, I'm sure. You're not interested in Rousseau, then?"

"Not I," he answered, coming and standing by my side at the window. "Seems to me that he was such a sentimental sort of a chap. Jolly night, isn't it?"

"Very," I answered. "I was out on the balcony enjoying it when you came in. How long have you been in St. Marien, Mr. Carlyon?" I continued.

"About ten days; that is all. I don't know that we should have stopped so long only Brown's rather sweet on the place."

"And do you like it?"

"Well, as much as most of these poky little Continental towns," he admitted, grudgingly. "I don't like any place so well as England, though. It's a great deal too hot here for me. Don't you find it so?"

"No, I don't think so," I answered. "But then, of course, I never attempt to go out in the middle of the day, and perhaps I am more used to it, too. You see, I have lived in France all my life."

"How well you speak English!" he said, admiringly. "Your people are all French, then, I suppose?"

My people! What grim irony it sounded! If only he could have known what a heartache his simple words gave me! I leaned back in my chair, and for a few moments I forgot his very existence. Was there not a cruel loneliness in the very thought that my memory was powerless to recall even my mother's face? Through all those long, weary years of childhood or girlhood, and now of womanhood, there had been no one to care for me, no one nearer than stern old Mme. Dupont, my head governess at the convent. And even now were things much better? I had a father, 'tis true, but a father who had only a cold, distracted sort of affection to offer me, whose strange manner of life was a constant mystery, and who met every question of mine as to our relatives, our past and my mother with stern silence or agitated admonitions. Perhaps the tears glistened in my eyes for a moment at Mr. Carlyon's innocent question. At any rate, something in my manner must have told him that his words had touched a painful chord, and he looked up at me appealingly.

"I'm so sorry," he said, humbly. "I always was a clumsy sort of fellow. You're not angry with me?"

"Of course not," I answered, lightly. "You have said nothing clumsy, either. And now we'll have some tea, shall we? Do you mind ringing the bell?"

He sprang up with unnecessary haste and rang it with quite unnecessary vigor. I ordered some tea from the alarmed servant, who came hurrying in. After that conversation languished for a few minutes, and as Mr. Carlyon still appeared distressed, I was obliged to try and explain to him a little.

"It was very silly of me just now," I said, "but I feel very lonely sometimes, and your words seemed to remind me of it. I have no one but my father, you know."

"But you have some friends, of course?"

I shook my head a little sadly.

"None?"

He looked quite distressed, and bewildered, too.

"But, Mlle. de Feurget!" he exclaimed, "it must be perfectly dreadful for you! Do you mean to say that you don't visit anywhere, and that no one comes to see you? Doesn't your father know any of the people here?"

"I suppose he knows them," I answered, sighing. "In fact, I know that he does; but he is quite a recluse. He will not go into any society at all!"

"That must be very bad for you," he said, feelingly. "It was awfully good of him to ask us here, if that is the case. I——"

There was a knock at the door and the sound of some one entering. Mr. Carlyon and I both looked round, and he forgot to finish his sentence.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

M. D'AUBRON IS DISAPPOINTED.

IT WAS M. d'Aubron who had entered. He was attired for leaving, and carried his hat in his hand. Somehow I don't think that he was too well pleased to find Mr. Carlyon with me.

"Are you leaving already, M. d'Aubron?" I asked.

"Unfortunately, yes," he answered, bowing. "I have some friends coming to my rooms this evening, and I must be there to entertain them. I'm s rry to hurry you, Carlyon, but——"

"Oh, I'm not coming yet," he interrupted, "not, at least, if Mlle. de Feurget will allow me to stay a little longer," he added, turning to me. I assured him at once that I should be very pleased to have him.

M. d'Aubron bit his lip and looked annoyed.

"Against mademoiselle I can of course say nothing," he remarked. "But you must allow me to remind you, Carlyon, that your engagement to me for this evening was a prior one."

"I haven't forgotten it. I'll look in on our way home," Mr. Carlyon promised.

M. d'Aubron's face cleared a little.

"Very good. I shall expect to have the pleasure then. Mlle. de Feurget, permit me to wish you good-evening. I am consoled for the loss of Mr. Carlyon's society by the reflection that I leave him in your hands."

I wished him good-evening, coldly, and he went.

"It's very nice of you to let me stop," Mr. Carlyon remarked, sipping the tea I had handed to him.

"I think it's very nice of you to want to stop," I answered; "besides, I'd a great deal rather you were here than with M. d'Aubron."

"Would you, really?" he exclaimed. "Why?"

"Because I don't like him."

"Oh, he isn't a bad sort," Mr. Carlyon said, meditatively. "I'm not sure that I care much for him myself, though," he added.

"I should think that he was a very bad companion for you," I remarked. "He plays cards, doesn't he?"

"Every one does here," Mr. Carlyon answered. "It's about the only thing to do."

"Do you play much?" I asked.

"Not I," he declared. "I've played a few times with D'Aubron and some of his friends, but it's a little too expensive for me."

"I should think so. M. d'Aubron generally wins, doesn't he?" I asked dryly.

Mr. Carlyon looked surprised.

"Yes. How do you know that?"

"Oh, I don't know," I said, shrugging my shoulders. "He seems to me to be the sort of man who would win at cards. To tell the truth, Mr. Carlyon," I continued, hesitatingly, "I have heard my father speak not altogether favorably of M. d'Aubron. I hope that you are not very friendly with him?"

His face clouded over a little, and he looked thoughtful.

"No, I'm not very friendly with him," he said; "I only met him at the casino, you know. Still, I think he's a gentleman. He's been rather kind to me."

There was a knock at the door, and a servant entered the room bearing a note.

"A gentleman for monsieur," he said, delivering it to Mr. Carlyon.

"For me!" Mr. Carlyon repeated, evidently a good deal surprised. "Who on earth can want to see me at this time of night? And we never left word where we were going, either. Sure there's no mistake?"

"I think not, sir," the man replied. "The note is addressed to the Honorable Arthur Carlyon, and the gentleman who gave it me desired that it should be handed into monsieur's own hands. He waits below."

Mr. Carlyon tore it open and glanced through the few words which it contained. At first he uttered a quick exclamation of surprise; then a deep red flush stole into his face and he crushed the note up indignantly.

"All right! You can tell the gentleman I'll be down in a moment," he said to the servant. "I'm so sorry to go," he added, turning to me, "but I'm afraid I must. A cousin of mine has turned up unexpectedly and wants to see me. I thought at first that it was only a reminder from D'Aubron, but it isn't."

"You must go, of course, then," I said, holding out my hand. "Good-evening."

"Good-bye, Mlle. de Feurget, and thank you so much for the pleasantest evening I've had since I left England. I wonder if you would allow—but perhaps you don't care to receive callers?" he asked anxiously.

I hesitated. It was so ungracious to refuse him, and my life was very dull. Why should he not come sometimes? It would be better for him, at any rate, than being with M. d'Aubron. There was no society to be scandalized, for, alas, I had none. Why should I not follow my own will for once? My father would not object, I felt sure. "I think that you might call—once, at any rate," I said, smiling.

He clasped my hand in his long brown fingers, and I bore it without flinching, although it hurt horribly.

"Thank you, Mlle. de Feurget. Thank you and good-bye."

He took himself off at last, and my eyes followed him with something like regret. I was very glad that he had come, very glad that I knew him. It seemed to me somehow that I was less friendless than I had been an hour ago, and I felt better in another way too. The absolute solitude of my life and the entire lack of companionship had not been without its effect upon me. I had felt myself daily growing more and more callous before the cold abstraction of my unhappy father. It was the slow adaptation of my nature to his, and it had begun to make itself felt. I had been hungering for a word of sympathy from some one, and the eager, respectful homage of that bright-faced English boy did me a world of good. I felt after he had gone that I could cry, and a woman who can shed tears is never in her worst state.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AN INTRODUCTION.

AFTER Mr. Carlyon had left me I gathered up my work and prepared to go to my room. Perhaps if I had done so things might have turned out very differently. Who can tell? But fate in the shape of a soft, sweet breath of night wind, which stole in through the still open window, drew me out on to the balcony instead; and when I saw the golden moon which had risen from behind the tops of the fir trees, and felt the soft, luxurious caress of the odorous night breeze upon my hot temples, I lingered. And leaning back against the wall, hidden in the shadow of the gable alone, I let my eyes wander dreamily over the shadowy landscape and up at the midnight sky.

The woman never lived who did not sometimes indulge in an idle dream, and for awhile my thoughts played havoc with reality. They were recalled suddenly by the sound of voices in the garden below. I glanced downward, and on the border of the path in front of the villa I saw two men standing talking.

One I knew at once, for the moonlight shone full upon his uncovered head. It was Mr. Carlyon. But his companion stood somewhat in the shadow of a thick shrub, and except that he was tall and wore a long ulster and cap, I could see nothing of him. They had moved to within easy hearing of where I was, but I could not escape into the room without being seen from below, and as I naturally did not desire this I stayed where I was listening, at first against my wish, it is true. But afterward I had not that excuse.

"I never was so surprised in my life to see any one, old chap," I heard Arthur Carlyon say, his loud boyish tones a little hushed, but still perfectly audible to me. "The last time I heard from home the matter said that the latest report about you was that you were—well, in a queer state. You were nearly drowned, weren't you? Tell us all about it."

There was a brief silence, broken by the low, clear tones of the other man. It was strange, incredible, preposterous! And yet, at his first words, I held my breath and felt my heart beat fast. Something in the timbre of his voice seemed to fall upon my ears with a curious sense of familiarity, and I leaned forward eagerly, straining my eyes through the darkness. But it was of no avail. I could distinguish nothing save the dim outline of the speaker, and that recalled nothing to me. It told me nothing, save that he was tall. Surely it was impossible—more than impossible, absurd! But though it seemed so, my heart still beat fast, and with my fingers locked nervously in the branches of the stephanotis which hung around the window, I leaned eagerly forward as far as I could. Afterward it seemed to me that I was very foolish. Even supposing that it were, what concern was it of mine? Was it not a matter for reproach that even the bare possibility should have so agitated me? What was he to me, or I to him, then?

"There is not much to tell," I heard the new-comer say slowly. "I was down at Clanavon Castle, that queer old place on the Northumbrian coast that my father was so fond of, looking through some papers which he had left there, and I took it into my head to explore some secret passages with the son of the housekeeper, who, I thought, would know all about them. Unfortunately he didn't, as the event proved."

"You were nearly drowned, weren't you?" Arthur Carlyon interrupted.

"Yes, we were. You see, we got landed in a very small cave just as the tide was coming in, and we were completely trapped. The passage by which we had come was submerged before we thought of turning back, and so our only retreat was cut off, and the tide was coming in fast."

"Couldn't you get away by the cliffs?"

"They were inaccessible. We couldn't even clamber a few feet up them. We could do nothing but wait till the last thing and then swim. There was scarcely a breath in my body when I was thrown up on the beach. I had lost consciousness and given up swimming long before. The man who was with me was picked up by an incoming fishing boat."

"And was he alive?"

"Just. He had a very close shave of it, but he's getting better now. I was almost given up myself at one time, but I just managed to pull through, and directly I was strong enough to travel the doctor ordered me to the South of France."

"But what on earth made you come to this out-of-the-way hole? Did you know that we were here?"

"Not until last week. I was at Nice then, and I had a letter from your mother, telling me that you were here with your tutor. I had other reasons for wanting to see this place, so I came over and have put up at the Leon d'Or for a few days."

"Our hotel! How jolly! I say, Bernard, you'll forgive my asking, won't you?" Arthur Carlyon continued, seriously, "but has anything been discovered yet—your father, you know. Have they found Neillson?"

The answer was so low that I could not catch it. But I gathered from the indignant nature of Mr. Carlyon's observations that it was not a satisfactory one.

"The blockheads! Stupid louts! It must make you feel wild, Bernard! Why, I believe it would send me mad if I were you, and there was a chance of the fellow being discovered."

"There is very little chance that he will be now," was the answer.

"I'm beastly sorry, old chap! Perhaps I oughtn't to talk to you about it. You don't look strong enough to stand much. But I couldn't help saying that."

"Thank you, Arthur. We won't talk about it any more, if you don't mind. Besides, there's something I want to say to you."

He dropped his voice a little, and I could not hear what he said. But apparently it was something which displeased Arthur Carlyon.

"It's all nonsense, you know, Bernard," I heard him say, testily. "You seem to think that Brown and I are a pair of babies, and that's going a little too far, you know. We can take care of ourselves, I can assure you. Besides, you don't know what you're talking about in the present case, at least. Our host there is a gentleman and a scholar, and I consider our invitation here a great compliment. I heard them talking about him in the casino this morning. He spends all his time in his library or among the poor people, they say. You're all wrong, I can assure you."

There was a brief silence, and I felt my cheeks grow hot, notwithstanding the cool, sweet breeze which swept softly over my face and rustled among the creepers and the shrubs. Then I heard the answering voice.

"Arthur, listen to me! I'm an older man than you, and I know more of the world. At any rate, I know more what I'm talking about in the present instance. These Continental watering places, especially the smaller ones, such as St. Marien, are simply hot-beds of gambling, the refuge and haunt of the lowest class of swindlers who have probably made the more fashionable resorts too hot for them. Of your host I know nothing—not even his name. The house was pointed out to me, and that is all. I say nothing against him—he may be as you say, a gentleman. No doubt he is, but that man, D'Aubron, whom I am told that you are intimate with, is nothing more nor less than a dangerous adventurer, a man who lives by his wits and by his skill at cards upon such boys as you. General Erle saw you with him this morning, and as he had not had an opportunity to warn you himself, he told me about it immediately I arrived. If Mr. Brown has suffered you to associate with him, and has gone with you to his rooms, I shall write and advise your father to change your tutor at once."

"You can do as you choose," Arthur Carlyon answered hotly. "I don't care. Old Erle always was a meddlesome idiot, and I don't believe he knows what he's talking about."

"General Erle is not an idiot, and men in his position, and with his regard for the truth, are not in the habit of making reckless assertions," was the stern reply. "Besides, he's a friend of your father's."

"Well, I'm not with D'Aubron now, at any rate, am I?" protested Arthur Carlyon. "He went away an hour ago."

"Oh, he has been here, then?" remarked the other.

"Yes, he dined here."

"And your host is a resident here? As such, Arthur, he must have known the fellow's character. Look here. Will you send in your excuses and come round to my hotel and talk it over there?"

"Certainly not. You talk to me as though I were a child."

"I shouldn't be here talking to you at all, Arthur, if I hadn't promised your mother that I would look after you. I have plenty of troubles of my own to occupy me, God knows."

Arthur Carlyon's tone changed at once.

"I know you have, old chap," he said, "and of course it's very good of you to bother about me at all. But don't you think that you're a little bit unreasonable in the present case? I do really. I can't help it."

"You won't come with me, then?"

"Not now. I am M. de Feurget's guest for the evening."

"Then perhaps you will take me in and introduce me. I shall—Oh, gracious!"

Arthur Carlyon's mysterious companion had changed his position suddenly, and the last exclamation had burst from trembling lips, and in a tone which had suddenly become hoarse with agitation. His cousin looked at him in amazement, and then, following his horror-struck riveted gaze, turned round. I, too, seeing a shadow cast between the two upon the grass, leaned over the balcony, and saw my father with his head uncovered standing in the lower window, with a cigarette between his teeth.

"Let me introduce my host, Monsieur de Feurget, to you, Bernard," said Arthur Carlyon, with a sudden access of dignity into his boyish manner. "Monsieur de Feurget, this is my cousin, the Earl of Alceston."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

TO LOVERS OF FEATHER BEDS.—There is an old story of an Indian and a "pale-face," who, after a long day's journey, lay down in a deserted cabin at nightfall to rest. The Indian, wrapping himself in his blanket, stretched himself on the floor of the cabin, with his feet to the fire, and was soon asleep.

His companion, meantime, has espied a feather bed in another room, and congratulating himself on his discovery, jumped in and was soon in a doze.

With the first rays of the morning light the Indian rose refreshed, and ready for the day's task. He went to rouse his comrade, when lo! he found him dead from the exhaustion of the previous day.

Luxurious repose is never true physical rest.

To enjoy that blessing to its fullest extent, freedom from restraint must be allowed every part of the body. A firm surface is required—one that will tend to keep the body stretched out at full length, that the lungs and heart may feel no sense of restriction by compression of the chest-walls, and that the blood may have uninterrupted course in every direction.

We should never be guilty of supposing that the person whom we saw sitting in a chair, with his chin pressing on his sunken chest, was enjoying true physical rest, no matter how fast asleep he might appear to be.

The tendency of the body to gravitate toward the lowest part of a feather-bed is beyond remedy.

In this position the whole body is often so curled up that no one part is free from constriction. The chest-walls are caved in, and the whole body suffers from the consequent lack of proper oxygenation of the blood and the restriction which is placed upon its general circulation. The blood moves sluggishly, and as a result the condition of "fat and flabby" is superinduced.

This condition is never likely to follow the constant use of a firm hair mattress.

Perfect physical repose, like perfect physical activity, is dependent upon a proper equilibrium of the bodily functions during slumber.

The story of the Indian and the white man might easily have been founded on fact.

DIVORCE.—In consequence of mental malady, a Georgia lady conceived it her duty to live apart from her husband, and, in order that he might apply for a divorce, forged documents which would give him cause. The husband knowing they were not true, but thinking that to humor his wife would cure her malady, presented the papers to the legal authorities and a divorce was granted. The ex-husband immediately began to make love to his former wife again and proposed marriage in due form, but, although she appeared happy in his company and would go with him to the theatre and like places, she absolutely refused his proffer of marriage and expressed a wish that he would wed a girl whom she named. Now the man is seeking to have the decree of divorce set aside.

AN INFERENCE.—Little Fanny (to her twin-sister): "Mr. Smith kissed Aunt Flora last night. I heard her say so." Mamma (overhearing): "Come to me instantly, Fanny. What do you mean by telling such a story?" Fanny (stoutly): "Well, I heard auntie say she had something from Mr. Smith's own lips, and what else could it have been?"

THE senior Bishop of Christendom, it is believed, is Sofronious, the Patriarch of Alexandria, who is 95 years old, and has been a Bishop for fifty-five years. Archbishop Kenrick, of St. Louis, consecrated 53 years ago, and Leo XIII. consecrated 52 years ago, come next in that respect.

HAD I THE POWER.

BY F. S.

Had I the power which, it is said,
The golden fair possess'd,
Upon that angel-featured face
The bloom of youth should rest.

Those soul-illumined eyes that speak,
With eloquence unknown
To words, the language of the heart,
Time should not call his own.

His iron finger should not trace
A line upon that brow;
It should remain when years are flown,
As shadowless as now.

Years might unheeded pass away,
And see no grace the less;
Her presence aye each path should with
A world of beauty bless.

A Girl's Mistake.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE YARCOM," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTMAS DAY came bright and frosty, and after service the whole party, including the Frenches and Mr. Staunton, went down to the skating pond, Nell keeping close by Malcolm's side, and most of the afternoon treating Mr. Staunton with most exasperating politeness and civility that astonished and discomfited her not a little.

"What is the matter, Nell? What have I done to offend you?" he whispered pleadingly, as he knelt on the ice to fasten her skate-strap.

"Offend me? Don't be absurd," Nell answered pettishly. "And what a time you are fastening that strap! How many holes are you going to make? Please make haste, Mr. Staunton, and let me go."

"I shall not let you go—I shall not fasten it till you tell me," Mr. Staunton declared decisively.

"In that case"—Nell balanced herself on one foot and looked down with demure mischievous eyes—"I shall be reduced to hopping over the pond on one leg, till I find some one more obliging."

"There, then;" Mr. Staunton fastened the strap viciously; "but all the same you shall tell me. Come, Nell; you were so pleasant and kind to me all yesterday, and now to-day you have been quite different—and my last day too," the young man went on pathetically, and Nell looked up half relentingly.

"Have I really been disagreeable?" she asked softly. "I did not mean it, only—"

"Only you ought not to change so suddenly," Mr. Staunton remonstrated. "Yesterday I fancied, I hoped all sorts of pleasant things, and to-day—what have I done to displease you, Nell? Won't you tell me?"

"You have done nothing," Nell said, coloring; "and you ought not to fancy things—only—well, to tell the truth, people are so silly, you know, and—and in fact I think you had better go and skate with some one else the rest of the afternoon, Mr. Staunton," Nell went on with with dignity. "That is all."

"That is all!" Mr. Staunton's face flushed. "As if I cared what people said."

"Yes, that is just like a man," Nell cried contemptuously. "Of course you don't care, it is nothing to you; but I care."

"It is everything to me!" Mr. Staunton exclaimed. "Everything that concerns you is of interest to me. Why, Nell, you must have seen from the very first how I loved you."

"That is nonsense," Nell answered decisively. "Why, just at first, you were crazy about Dora—every one could see that."

"Dora! As if I could ever have thought of her when you there!" Mr. Staunton cried. "Oh, confound it, here she comes! Nell, darling, you do care for me a little, don't you?"

Dora was close upon them and Nell had no time to speak, but her blushing face and shy eyes were eloquent enough; and it was with a very happy smile Mr. Staunton turned to Dora, who came up skates in hand, blooming and beautiful in her fur hat and jacket.

"Malcolm is ready—we are going, Nell," she said, looking sharply from one to the other; "and, Mr. Staunton, the Frenches are awaiting."

"Then I must go."

Mr. Staunton never took his eyes from Nell's face, and Dora colored angrily at his neglect of her presence.

"It is good-bye, is it not?" she asked, holding out her hand. "We shall not see you again, I suppose?"

"No; I go to-morrow morning," Mr. Staunton answered. "Good-bye, Mrs. Snow, and thank you for all your kindness."

He dropped her hand hastily, and turned to Nell just as the Frenches and Major Holt came up.

"Good-bye—I shall write," he whispered softly, holding her hand with a clinging clasp, and Nell smiled and nodded.

She was so very quiet and thoughtful all the way home that Malcolm was certain something unusual had happened.

"What is it, Nell? Have you anything to tell me?" he asked, gently drawing her a little aside as Dora entered the house.

They were standing on the doorstep, with the white snow all round. Nell lifted her sweet blushing face to his shyly.

"No, nothing particular," she faltered. "He said he would write. You are not vexed, are you, Malcolm?" she asked; and Major Holt smiled at her pleading face.

"Vexed! What on earth put that into your head, child?" he said lightly. "You can't expect me to be very jubilant at the prospect of losing you, I suppose? Run into the house, Nell; don't add to the series of your offences by being late for dinner."

"Always dinner!" and Nell disappeared into the house, to return in a moment bringing a flower and frond of fern in her hand.

"This is for your coat. Will you wear it, Malcolm?" she whispered shyly, "just to show you are not vexed or disappointed."

Major Holt's heart gave a great throb as he looked down into the anxious, wistful eyes. He took the nosegay gently from her hand.

"You foolish Nell. There, will that satisfy you?" he said, lifting the white fingers to his lips in his chivalrous way. And Nell, relieved of her vague fears, ran merrily into the house.

"After all, there is nobody exactly like Malcolm," the girl thought, as she stood before the glass, fastening the flowers in her hair. "I never could trust anybody as I trust him. Somehow the young men are different nowadays."

Nell looked meditatively at herself in the glass. "So long as one is pretty, that is all they care for. I look quite nice to-night—almost as well as Dora—and to-morrow I shall be yellow and hideous. Oh dear, how tiresome it is only to look nice sometimes!"

And then, with a laugh at her own vanity, Nell threw her train over her arm and ran gaily downstairs.

* * * * * *

"Have the letters come, Stephens?"

Mrs. Snow entered the breakfast-room earlier than usual next morning and took the bag from the servant's hands. There were three for Major Holt, one for herself, and one for Nell. Mrs. Snow's eyes sparkled angrily as she looked at the bold handwriting and the crest on the envelope. She stood with the letter in her hand hesitating a moment—footsteps sounding outside and Malcolm's voice talking to Nell startled her. With a sudden impulse she hid the letter in the pocket of her dress, and took her place behind the urn just as Major Holt and Nell entered the room.

"Any letters?" Nell looked disappointed. "Only three, and all for you, Malcolm! I do wish I had some one to write to me now and then."

"Perhaps you may, by-and-by," Major Holt said, smiling as he glanced carelessly at his letters; "probably more interesting ones than these you are looking at so enviously."

"It seems so funny not to have any relations," Nell went on thoughtfully; "only you and Dora."

"My dear, you forget; there are your mother's friends," Dora put in mildly; "much nearer to you than we are. I often think, Malcolm, we have not done right in separating Nell so completely from her mother's relations."

Major Holt looked annoyed.

"I did not know her mother's family," he said curtly. "And Nell has relations enough with us. You don't want any more, do you, Nell?"

"Certainly if they were not nice, it might be a nuisance," Nell assented. "Only it would be pleasant to have their letters."

Nell, still very thoughtfully sipped her coffee, and Malcolm looked at her with an amused smile in her eyes.

"Never mind, Nell, there is sure to be one in the morning," he whispered; and Nell flushed up angrily.

"As if I were thinking of that, as if I cared a button whether it came or not," she said with a defiant toss of her head. "Malcolm, shall we ride this morning?"

Dora sat by the fire after the two had cantered down the avenue, in an unusually disturbed mood. She had secreted the letter on the spur of the moment, and now felt half frightened at what she had done, and wholly irresolute how to act. She took the letter from her pocket, and looked at the familiar handwriting longingly. There were several little notes, full of a boy's silly flattering words—and an irresistible impulse seized her to open the letter in her hand to see if Nell had really won Owen Staunton's heart or only his fickle fancy.

In another moment it was too late to draw back. Over and over again she read the glowing, passionate words—words which told of a love so devoted and tender, so chivalrous and reverential, that all Dora's beauty and grace had never won from any man. Dora's hatred and jealousy of Nell increased every time she read the letter, till, at last, with a sudden hasty movement, she tore it in two, and, flinging it on the fire, watched it slowly crumple up and smoulder away. And then Dora gave a sigh of relief.

Morning after morning Nell watched for her letter, morning after morning she turned away disappointed till, at last, hope died slowly away, and she ceased to expect it altogether.

"It was true, after all, as Dora had said; men were all like that, all fickle and faithless alike. It was only a flirtation."

Nell used to bite her lips and smile at Malcolm across the table, and look perfectly unconscious and indifferent when the postman came; but Malcolm, watching her anxiously, fancied she was looking pale and thin, and that her eyes had grown unusually large and bright.

"Nell, dear, is there anything I can do?" he asked one afternoon when he came in from hunting, and found Nell sitting alone before the fire, looking into the blaze with a tired, sad face. "Do you think I can't see you are fretting for—something not worth a thought? Won't you tell me, Nell?"

The color rushed back to Nell's face as he spoke.

"Fretting! What on earth do you mean, Malcolm?" she exclaimed. "Dora has been putting some nonsense into your head, I suppose. Are you really silly enough to think I believed any of the nonsense Mr. Staunton talked?—for that is what you mean, I know.

"You had every reason to believe it," Major Holt said, stroking his moustache gravely; "but, as I said before, I can't understand you young people nowadays. It was different when I was young."

"How long ago is that, Methuselah?" and Nell smiled bravely in his face. "And if, as Dora had quite decided, I am moaning over Mr. Staunton's defection, may I ask what steps you intend to take? Duelling has gone out of fashion now, you know."

"So much the worse;" and Major Holt pulled his moustache savagely. "I should like to have it out with the fellow somehow."

"No matter how you humiliated me!" Nell cried. "What! add another to the list of his conquests—another feather in his cap—be pointed at as the girl who was so desperately in love with him, so anxious to be married, that she would have him whether he liked her or not? Why, Malcolm, if lifting my little finger could bring him back, I would not do it!" the girl said vehemently, quivering with excitement and anger.

Major Holt looked at her wistfully. He was by no means so convinced in his own mind that she was as indifferent as she appeared, and his loyal heart was filled with love and admiration for the brave spirit that was so like its trouble fearlessly in the face, and laughed at sympathy and pity. Was it wonderful that the love which had never wavered grew deeper more hopeful as time went on—that hopes and yearnings, which had slumbered for a while in his heart, revived with the crocuses and the snowdrops, and the first sweet breath of early spring?

CHAPTER IV.

"NELL, are you ready? The carriage is waiting."

It was the night of the Frenches' ball, and Nell came sailing down the oak staircase all in filmy white, with starry white flowers in her hair and dress.

"We are not late, I hope? I promised Charlie Frenche to be in time for the first dance."

"Charlie Frenche? Don't flirt so much with that boy to-night, Nell. As you are strong, be merciful."

The words were jesting ones, but the tone was earnest enough. And Nell colored and laughed as she answered.

"Why not? He is old enough to take care of himself. And why shouldn't I amuse myself? Are you men to have all the fun to yourselves? Malcolm, do you like my dress? Do I look nice?"

She looked up into his face as she spoke; and for the first time in her life felt her color rise and her eyes droop as she met his passionate admiring gaze.

Charlie Frenche, who met them at the door and led Nell off to the quadrille then forming, was surprised and vexed at her abstracted face and short answers.

"What is the matter with you, Nell, to-night?" he asked impatiently at last. "And why do you keep casting such wistful looks at Malcolm? Have you had a quarrel, or has he been blowing you up about something?"

"Quarreled! Nonsense! Malcolm and I never had a quarrel in our lives," Nell answered quickly.

"Then what is the matter? I am sure there is something," Charlie persisted.

"Well, if you must know"—Nell smiled coquettishly in his face—"he gave me a lecture just before we came out; and it was about you."

"About me?" Charlie laughed, well pleased. "What have I been doing?"

"Doing! Oh, nothing. He was warning me not to flirt too much with you to-night; that is all," Nell answered curtly.

"Ah, somehow I fancied he did not quite like you and me being such good friends." Charlie stroked his mustache complacently. "I suppose when a man gets to Malcolm's age, he does feel a little jealous of the young fellows."

"Jealous!" Nell burst into a fit of merry laughter that scandalised Mrs. Snow, who was dancing in the next set. "The idea of Malcolm being jealous of a boy like you! Charlie, dear, you are too absurd."

"Not such a boy, Miss Nell," Charlie muttered sulkily; "as old, at all events, as that fellow Owen Staunton you used to think so much of a little while ago!"

"Staunton!" Nell looked up with calm blank eyes. "Oh, yes; of course! How stupid of me to forget! He was here at Christmas, wasn't he? Yes, I rather liked him, I think."

"Liked him! Why, you were awfully spoony," Charlie cried. "And now you pretend to have forgotten all about him. Nell, what a little flirt you are!"

Nell laughed—a hard tuneless laugh that grated on Charlie's ears.

"It is a long time ago—nearly three months," she said lightly. "You can't expect one to remember so long. Have you seen Mr. Staunton lately, Charlie?"

"The last time I was in town; and awfully seedy he looked," Charlie answered. "He has gone to the bad terribly lately."

"How gone to the bad?"

The dance was over by this time. They had left the ball-room and were sauntering up and down the conservatory, and Nell paused and looked intently at a white camellia blossom as she spoke.

"Oh, drinks and gambles! You know what one means, Nell, when one says a fellow has gone to the bad," Charlie went on. "Old Captain Staunton is in a great trouble about it. Owen is engaged to his daughter, you know."

"Is he?" Nell's voice was very clear and distinct. "I did not know. She is here to-night, isn't she, Charlie? Point her out to me by-and-by, please. And if you are very good I'll give you the next waltz but one." Nell smiled at him with sweet bewildering eyes; and Charlie felt his face flushed hotly.

"You are engaged to Walker for the next, aren't you?" he asked. And Nell nodded. "I can't imagine why you like that fellow so much, Nell," he went on jealously.

"I don't particularly like him," Nell answered carelessly. "He amuses me."

"You make him believe you like him," Charlie asserted. "Nell, what is the matter with you? You have changed so lately. You have never been like yourself since Malcolm came home."

"Haven't I?" Nell's dark eyes looked sad enough now. "How changed, Charlie? Tell me; and I will try to improve," she said softly.

"I can't quite tell." Charlie hesitated. "You were always jolly and nice, and all that; but you are different now. Sometimes when you drop your voice and look up so sweetly and softly, one feels—well, as if a fellow didn't know whether he was standing on his head or his heels," Charlie

continued, eagerly. "It is very nice at the time; and I like it awfully. But, candidly, Nell, I don't think it is an improvement."

"That is honest, surely," she answered softly. "Thank you for telling me, Charlie. I think I have been copying some of Dora's airs and graces lately; and I don't think they do suit me. Shall we go back now?"

"Wait a moment." Charlie drew Nell back as she was moving away. "You wanted to see Miss Staunton, didn't you? Well, here she is, coming in at the door."

A tall girl, with brown hair twisted in a shining coil round her head, entered the conservatory, leaning on a gentleman's arm. She had a sweet gentle face and soft blue eyes; and she looked rather curiously at the two figures in the corner as she passed, then whispered something to her companion, who smiled and nodded in answer.

"What did she say?" Nell's cheeks were blazing with anger; and her little hands plucked nervously at the feathers in her fan till they fluttered in a white shower at her feet. "Something disagreeable, I have no doubt. Ah, here is Malcolm coming in search of me!"

Major Holt came up with a rather disapproving face.

"Our dance, I think, Nell," he said gravely. And then, as Charlie moved away and Nell put her hand on his arm, "What is the matter, child?" he went on anxiously. "I can feel your hands burning even through your gloves; and your eyes are far too bright. Are you going to have a fever, Nell; or what is the matter?"

"Nothing. I am quite well," Nell answered quickly. "And I am enjoying myself so much! No, I am sorry, Mr. Cuthbert," turning to a gentleman who came up to ask her to dance; "but you are too late. My card is quite full."

Nell was never lost for partners; but to-night her flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, and the starry white flowers in her hair attracted general admiration.

"Nell, do rest a little; you will tire yourself out," and Malcolm spoke imperatively, as Nell whirled past in a rapid valse.

"Tired! Not a bit!" Nell paused a moment to answer. "I could dance for ever. Come, Charlie, don't let us lose this valse."

Faster and faster the music played, faster and faster Nell and Charlie whirled round.

"It is delicious, isn't it?" Nell remarked gaily. "Ah—Charlie, hold me; I am going to fall!" And then there was a little stir in the room; and the music ceased as Major Holt came forward with an anxious white face, and took the insensible little figure in his arms.

"She has fainted. It is the excitement," he muttered hastily, carrying her of out the ball-room into the library.

"Let me help you." Miss Staunton, who was standing near the door, followed him into the room. "Poor child! She has danced too much! I saw how flushed and excited she looked quite early in the evening. Open the window, please, Major Holt."

So when Nell, after a few minutes of blessed unconsciousness, came back to life again, it was Miss Staunton's gentle face that was bending over her with such anxious eyes. She sank back on the couch with a hasty gesture of dislike and fear.

"Not you! Malcolm, come! Send her away!" she cried, clinging to him, shivering from head to foot.

"My darling, it is only Miss Staunton," Malcolm said tenderly. "Are you better now? Can you go home?"

Nell sat up on the couch and pushed her hair back from her flushed face.

"I fainted, didn't I?" she asked. "I can't think what was the matter. I never did such a thing in my life before."

"You danced too much," Malcolm said gently; "and Miss Staunton kindly helped me to bring you in here."

"Ah, yes!" Nell turned with an effort to Miss Staunton. "Please forgive me! I did not recognize you just at first." And Miss Staunton smiled at her penitent tone.

"Forgive you, dear? What for?" she said gaily. "Major Holt, you can leave her in my care till you see after the carriage. The sooner she goes home to bed the better."

So Malcolm went; and Nell lay quietly with closed eyes, while Miss Staunton bathed her forehead with eau de Cologne, and talked to her in a sweet voice that was very soothing to Nell's ears.

"She will make him a far better wife than I ever should," the girl thought sadly. And she put up her hand and touched Miss Staunton's white fingers caressingly. "How kind you are! Would you mind kissing me?" she pleaded. And Miss Staunton bent her head and gave the required caress heartily.

"You are better now, dear? Here is Major Holt," Miss Staunton said, as Malcolm entered the room, accompanied by Mrs. Frenche, who had only just been told of Nell's sudden illness, and came full of anxious inquiries.

"I am quite well now." Nell rose, looking terribly pale and shadowy in her white dress. "You must scold Charlie, Mrs. Frenche. He made me dance too much. Oh, Malcolm, don't turn me into an Egyptian mummy!"

Nell laughed feebly as Malcolm wrapped her warmly in a thick shawl; but she was too tired and exhausted to resent being muffled up and treated like a baby. She lay back in the carriage with Major Holt's arm round her, and her head resting on his shoulder quietly and passively. On reaching home she drank the wine and water, and submitted to be delivered over to Martha's care, and sent to bed with unusual meekness.

But Malcolm grew alarmed when two or three days passed and Nell still looked white and ill, and seemed to care for nothing but lying quietly on the couch in the library, pretending to read, but really lying with wide-open eyes thinking—always thinking—of the past! There was not much the matter, the doctor—whom Malcolm insisted on calling in—said; only want of strength. Nell must drink plenty of port wine and rest for a while, and she would soon be all right again. But he drew Malcolm aside and nearly drove him frantic with anxiety by asking if there was any hereditary diseases in the family, any tendency to consumption or decline!

"No? Then is there anything on her mind?" he inquired, much to Mrs. Snow's amusement.

"What is the matter with you, Nell?" she asked one day when Nell had been more than usually languid. "Are you really ill, or are you fretting after Owen Staunton still?"

"Dora"—Nell started up in a white heat of fury—"how dare you insult me so? If you ever speak so again——"

She sank back on the couch exhausted by her violent emotion, but Dora's mocking words effected the cure that all Malcolm's tenderness had failed to bring. It was one thing to lie brooding over the love that Owen Staunton had sought and won and thrown away, and another to have the truth brought rudely before her and laughed at by Dora's mocking tongue! From that day Nell began to improve, creeping slowly back to health, till, one by one, her invalid habits were laid aside, the color came back to her face, and she laughed and sang about the house like the Nell of the old days—yet not quite the same. She would never be quite the old bright, winsome Nell again, Malcolm thought with a sigh sometimes.

Major Holt came into the library one afternoon and found her sitting before the fire, busily engaged in arranging the contents of her desk. It was a cold May day, and the Major, who was tired after a long ride, thought how comfortable and cosy she looked half buried in a great easy-chair, with the firelight shinning on her bright face.

"Reading your love-letters, Nell?" he asked, making a pretence of snatching at the parcel on her knee. "Come, hand them over; let me have a look."

"Very likely," Nell laughed. "Yes, you may look at that parcel if you like; it will be extremely interesting to you, I dare say."

Malcolm laughed as he opened a heterogeneous collection of embroidery and crochet patterns, receipted bills, and little scraps of pretty cuts from newspapers and magazines.

"I can't say it is particularly interesting," he observed. "Do you know, Nell, I have all the letters you wrote to me while I was away, still?"

"Have you, really?" Nell looked up surprised and pleased. "And such nonsense as they were! I often wondered if you had patience to read them all through."

"They were just what I wanted, however," Major Holt continued; "little scraps of home news to cheer me in my lonely hours. I used to read them over and over again till——" He paused abruptly, and Nell colored and smiled.

"I am so glad. What lectures Dora used to give me about those letters!" she said musingly: "she said they were childish, nonsensical, all kinds of disagreeable things. But I knew better; I knew you would like to know how Casper and the horses and all were getting on. And how delighted I used to be when your letters came!"

"Were you really?" Malcolm pulled her hair gently. "Did you really care to have them, Nell?"

"Why, of course." Nell was very emphatic. "I have so few people to write to me, you know, a letter is quite an event." She bent over the desk silently a moment. "See, Malcolm, here is papa's portrait. I am not a bit like him, am I?"

"No, you are like your mother." Malcolm hesitated. "Nell, I have her sister's address still if you would care to have it."

"I should." Nell looked up quickly, and Malcolm unlocked a drawer in his escritoire and took out a card. Nell looked at it, read the address silently, and put it carefully away in her desk.

"It might be useful some day—if you were to marry for instance, and turn me out. Why, Malcolm"—Nell looked up with mischievous eyes—"how conscious you look! Come now, confess. Who is it?"

"Nonsense, Nell." Major Holt pulled his mustache in some confusion.

"Who can it be?" Nell conjectured. "One of the Frenches? Miss Packhurst? There is nobody about here half nice enough for you. Oh, Malcolm?"—the pretty lips quivered, and Nell looked up pathetically—"it isn't Dora?"

"Dora! Don't be absurd, Nell!" Major Holt cried. "Can't you guess who it is?" He knelt down on the rug till his tall head was on the level with Nell's, and his eyes looked straight into hers. "Nell, don't you know I shall never marry unless you will be my wife?"

"I!" Nell started away in utter astonishment. "Oh, Malcolm, you are joking!"

"Is it so impossible then?" Major Holt's voice was very gentle and sad. "Never mind, Nell. After to-night we will forget I ever said it, and be brother and sister again, but just for once—— Why, Nell, I have loved you ever since you were a child; all the time I was in India I looked forward to coming home and winning you, and since then——"

"But, Malcolm, I am not fit to be your wife," Nell remonstrated. "You ought to marry some beautiful clever woman, not a little insignificant dot like me."

"But if I want you"—Malcolm took her little cold hands gently in his—"what then? Is it quite impossible?"

Nell was silent.

"Would it really make you happier, Malcolm?" she asked wistfully after a while—"are you sure?"

"Quite; it will give me all I want in the world." Major Holt spoke earnestly, and Nell hesitated no longer.

"Very well, then," she said quietly, "if you are quite sure—if you won't repent—oh, Malcolm, I would do anything to make you happy! You have been so good to me all my life and I—— Why, if I lived to be a hundred years old I could never repay one half of what you have done for me!" Nell cried passionately; and Major Holt, selfish for once in his daylight, took the trembling little figure, desk and all, in his arms, and never noticed how pale Nell's cheeks had grown or what pathetic tears filled her dark eyes.

Long after he left her, she sat looking into the fire, trying to realize what had happened—that she had really promised to be Malcolm's wife. A sudden thought struck her; she hesitated a moment, then opened a little drawer in her desk, and took out two or three little relics—a photograph, a spray of ivy, a faded rose, and bunch of violets—innocent little relics that spoke to her of the past. Each flower recalled some happy memory, some whispered words of love, some look more eloquent than any words. One by one Nell took them up with reverent fingers—once more she pressed them to her lips in a last good-bye, then placed them on the fire, and watched them slowly smoulder away.

No one but Mrs. Snow was much surprised to hear of the engagement. Major Holt's devotion to his ward had been too apparent for that; but Dora, though she congratulated Malcolm, and kissed and said all manner of pleasant things to Nell, was in reality sorely disturbed. Nell once Malcolm's wife, and mistress of the Hall, Dora knew her days of supremacy would be over. Bitterly she regretted the blind folly that had moved her to destroy Mr. Staunton's letters. There had been two more since the first, both of which Dora had opened, read, and burnt; and then Owen ceased to write. "Nell was only like other girls," he said bitterly to himself; "she had only been flirting, only amusing herself." He tried his best to forget her by plunging into all kinds of mad dissipation; but in his most reckless moments, in many a wild place and scene, her wistful eyes haunted him, her sweet face seemed to follow him with a meek appeal, and Owen would turn away heartsick and disgusted.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AN OPPORTUNE FRIEND will be found in Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, when racked by a severe Cold, and the many Lung or Throat affections which sometimes follow. This old remedy has met the approval of two generations, and is to-day as popular, safe, and effective as ever.

Scientific and Useful.

INK SPOTS.—For removing ink spots from marble an exchange recommends a paste made by dissolving an ounce of oxalic acid and half an ounce of butter of antimony in a pint of rain water, and adding sufficient flour to form a thin paste. Applying to the stains with a brush, allow it to remain three or four days, and then wash it off. Make a second application if necessary.

SLEEP WALKING.—A cure for sleep-walking, says a correspondent, can be effected by laying upon the carpet, by the side of the sleep-walker's bed, a strip of sheet metal—iron, zinc, or copper—so wide and long that when he puts his feet out of bed they will rest upon the metal. The coldness felt will awken him thoroughly, and he will go to bed again. A friend, the writer adds, checked the habit of sleep-walking in his son by placing a strip of wet carpet by the side of his bed.

CARRIED IN A CANE.—An inventor has produced an electric cane lamp. The handle of the cane contains an incandescent lamp, the two poles of which are connected with the plates of a battery. Below this is a small chamber to carry the battery fluid. When it is desired to use the lamp the cap is taken off and the cane inclined so that the liquid it contains comes in contact with the electrodes. A current is thus produced that will, it is asserted, keep the light going for an hour.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR LEATHER.—The old saying, "There is nothing like leather," will require to be altered, for a substitute for it has been found, which is said to be as like leather as two peas. It is called "flexus fibra," and is derived from flax, suitably prepared and oiled. It has the same appearance as leather, is particularly supple, and takes a polish equally well with the best kinds of calf. The material is said to possess great tenacity, while affording ease and comfort to the foot when made into shoes.

A NOVEL PENCIL.—A novel lead pencil has been invented by an American. The pencil is covered with narrow strips of specially prepared paper, run on coils, and so arranged that by releasing one end of a coil with a pin or the point of a pen-knife a strip of paper can be reeled off, leaving the pencil with a cone point and about one-eighth of an inch of lead uncovered. The inventor proposes to cover lead, crayon, and slate pencils in the same way. The pencils are painted in fancy colors, and so closely wrapped around that the seams in the paper are said to be invisible.

Farm and Garden.

TIRES.—Wide tires largely assist in packing down the roads, and when in use they very materially lessen the work of the teams.

TOOL-HOUSE.—A house for tools and farm implements should be provided. It is paying heavy interest on capital when valuable implements are exposed to the weather. The iron parts become rusty and the wood warps, the result being that the implement will never again give satisfaction. Keep all implements clean and well oiled.

FEED.—Careful trials have proven that for feeding during the winter one ton of good wheat or oat straw, one ton of good clover hay and three or four hundred pounds of good wheat bran are equivalent to the same weight of timothy hay, says an exchange. With a good feed of this given under a comfortable shelter growing cattle or sheep can readily be kept in a good thrifty condition during the winter.

ROADS.—Let any farmer haul a load on a rough and muddy road, and then estimate the cost for his time, team and wear of vehicle during the period he is engaged at such work, comparing the result with the small additional tax he would have to pay for a better road, and the probability is that he will favor an increased tax and better roads. The winter is coming and the lack of good roads will be severely felt.

WEEDS.—Weeds are the badge of slovenliness. They are indices of poverty. The good farmer in the East feels the disgrace of a field blooming with ox-eye daisies. The Western wheat grower, if wise, ceases to wonder at his low yields in comparison with Old England, even sometimes with New England; he understands that superficial culture, extreme economy of labor, even to absence of all cultivation, account sufficiently for small production. He does not for a moment blame his soil for it.

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On Commonplace People.

If one were looking for a single simple test of disposition and character on their more human side, it would be difficult to find a better indication than the way in which we regard people who appear to us commonplace. It is true we should be unfair if we judged all men by their treatment of commonplace people. There are very delightful and good men and women who live in seclusion in a restricted circle, absorbed in their own particular pursuits and investigations, until they do not feel quite at ease on meeting strangers who are living average lives.

One may, for example, see specialists in science and distinguished bookworms who have lost "touch" with commonplace people engaged in every-day monotonous work and seldom stirred by unusual thought. They cannot lightly enter into casual intercourse with the man in the street.

It is not a sense of personal superiority, nor is it social pride, but it is an inaptitude for talking with strangers on a level common to all men which puts a small percentage of good people aside as exceptions when we make such a sweeping statement as that men reveal their own dispositions most readily by the manner of their intercourse with their fellows whom they regard as ordinary, commonplace, mediocre. But of nearly all of us it may safely be said, "Let me watch how he treats those for whom he has no special care, the undistinguished ruck of mankind, and I will tell you what kind of man he is."

It is a discouraging thing to notice the rarity with which people who think themselves not quite commonplace accept frankly and naturally, without invidious feeling, those whom they regard as at or below the average of mankind. What proportion of people—men and women—who are educated, well-read, well-to-do, and so, judging by surface appearances, not quite ordinary, can talk naturally to men or women who are illiterate and poor, and so, judging again by surface appearance, are commonplace?

There are many wrong ways of meeting one's fellows of a different social level, and there is only one right way. Take some of the wrong ways first. There are people who are or pretend to be annoyed at the commonplace. They like to be amused, stirred up, to extract the compliment of exertion from any one to whom they talk. Fancying themselves clever, they cannot endure dulness and sameness. No virtues will counterbalance stolidity and mental torpor. They cannot bear the slow repetitions of country life. The mediocre man is an object of contempt, and perhaps a butt for wit. From a stand-point of pert self-satisfaction, they regard the mass of mankind as an inferior race of beings.

Others who are not annoyed by the presence of people less clever than themselves make a virtue of enduring them. They pride themselves on the exercise of tolerance. It is very well to know "these people"—rather generous and creditable; it may do them good to associate with their betters—of course at a proper distance. One ought, you know, to bridge over these social gaps. In this way they talk to each other, and then, with a cleverly regulated air of condescension, they converse with their inferiors, "with a bar between," as Browning expresses it.

A third equally objectionable spirit that is often brought into the intercourse between class and class is that of cool study. Men and women are regarded as though they were so many curiosities. This was the vulgar motive that some few years ago sent fine ladies picking their way into the slums to shudder and exclaim at the life of the miserable and outcast.

The danger of looking at men and women as characters or types, and not as individuals, always besets students of human nature. Unless such study is carried on quietly and naturally, a personal interest being felt in the men and women who are observed, we belonging to their circle for the time being, the relationship between the student and the subject must be coarse and vulgar.

To go into the homes of the poor on purpose to study them, using them deliberately as human models, is one of the most offensive forms of prying snobbishness. But very ordinary people are not of much value as specimens for the human collection of the average professional observer.

The only right way of meeting commonplace people, as of meeting clever people, is to lop off all thoughts of comparison with ourselves, to forget which is the richer or which the brighter, and to meet just naturally as man with man, to want nothing different from what is, to accept without demur the character of the man with whom we talk, carrying our own individuality to his level, to empty ourselves of all thought of ourselves, and to take a pleasure in giving the nature before us an opportunity for free play under the influence of sympathy. To put the case in a concrete form. You are waiting for the train and happen to take a seat on the platform bench alongside an artisan on his way home, or you find yourself returning from your morning walk at the same moment as your charwoman is approaching the house to commence her day's duties, or on Sunday your stroll takes you abreast of a good brother in his best black suit going to preach at the village chapel, or you stop for a breathing-space alongside the aged man who is mending the parish road; can you, without self-consciousness, and because of a delight in human nature, begin a natural talk, unforced, self-sufficing, though commonplace? Can you presently fall into such easy chat as neighbors would have, yet keeping to subjects that suit your individuality as well as that of your neighbor? If not, you have yet a lesson to learn in human intercourse.

The truth is that the human heart is best fed from the great tracts of ordinary life. However delightful it may be to live with high thought, to feel the fascination of brilliant wit or philosophic subtlety in free play, cleverness does not satisfy. Even in books, word-pictures of ordinary life, faithfully drawn so as to bring out the beauty and pathos of the struggle for life among commonplace people, are better than reams of sparkling epigram.

Of course there is no necessary antagonism between cleverness and a delight in the ways of commonplace people. It is the cheap contempt for mediocrity which the avowed lovers of smartness affect that we condemn. The worshipper of brilliance, polish, fine manners, and trained wit often passes by what is equally worthy, though hidden in a more sober garb—heroic steadfastness, uncomplaining endurance, the power of extracting enjoyment from meagre resources—qualities that are often most fully developed in commonplace people. Cleverness may be a suitable test of men for special purposes, but in every-day affairs it makes an unfair dividing-line.

TAKE care in your talk never unnecessarily to say that which, if repeated, may give offence to others. Because it may often be injurious to yourself at a time and in a manner unexpected. Observe this well, I say; for many even of the prudent err in this respect; and it is difficult to abstain from it. But if the difficulty be great, much greater is the advantage which will result to him who can practice this rule.

DON'T repress the buoyant spirit of your children. Half an hour of merriment, round the lamp and firelight of a home, blots out the remembrance of many a care and annoyance during the day; and the best safeguard they can take with them into the world is the unseen influence of a bright little domestic sanctum.

DAY creeps after day, each full of facts, dull, strange, despised things, that we cannot enough despise—call heavy, prosaic and desert. And presently the aroused intellect finds gold and gems in one of these scorned facts, then finds that the day of facts is a rock of diamonds, that a fact is an Epiphany of God.

IN all lives there is a crisis in the formation of character. It comes from many causes, and from some which on the surface are apparently trivial. But the result is the same—a sudden revelation to ourselves of our secret purposes, and a recognition of our perhaps long-shadowed but now masterful convictions.

ALL the world, all that we are, and all that we have—our bodies and our souls, our actions and our sufferings, our conditions at home, our accidents abroad, our many sins and our seldom virtues—are so many arguments to make our souls dwell low in the deep valley of humility.

"NEVER less idle than when idle," was the motto which the admirable Victoria Colonna wrought upon her husband's dressing-gown. And may we not justly regard our appreciation of leisure as a test of improved character and growing resources?

As a man loves gold, in that proportion he hates to be imposed upon by counterfeits, and in proportion as a man has regard for that which is above price and better than gold, he abhors that hypocrisy which is but its counterfeit.

THE best way to prove the clearness of our mind is by showing its faults; as when a stream discovers the dirt at the bottom, it convinces us of the transparency of the water.

ROUGHNESS is a needless cause of discontent. Severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproof from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting.

MAKE no man your idol; for the best man must have faults, and his faults will usually become yours in addition to your own. This is as true in art as in morals.

MEN are but children of a larger growth; our appetites are apt to change as theirs, and full as craving, too, and full as vain.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

VIOLET.—Allhallows Day was instituted by the Catholic Church to commemorate all the saints and martyrs in whose honor no particular day is set apart.

LEGIS.—If a woman leaves her husband of her own accord she cannot claim anything from him in the way of support, unless she can show that she goes in absolute fear of her life.

SHENANDOAH.—There is more in a heap of coal than most persons are aware of. Besides gas, a ton of gas coal will yield 1500 lbs. of coke, 20 gallons of ammonia water, and 140 lbs. of coal tar, from which among other substances is obtained the new product known as saccharine, which is said to be 230 times as sweet as the best cane sugar.

ROSE.—We can scarcely believe that any girl would make, in good faith, such inquiries as those made by "Rose." All girls, even those who "flirt" the most, know perfectly well that to answer signals made by strange men is both silly and unladylike, and that by doing so they lose the respect of all the other sex whose respect is worth having. It was silly to answer the signals the first time, and it would be equally silly to do so again.

MOORE.—Scotia now means Scotland, but it once meant Ireland. It is said that the Phœnicians first gave Ireland the name of Hibernia, meaning thereby "utmost, or last habitation," for beyond that land, westward, the Phœnicians never extended their voyages. Towards the decline of the Roman Empire, the country began to be called Scotia, a name retained by the monastic writers till the eleventh century, when the name of Hibernia was again used.

SEMLOR.—Incroyable means "incredible," "inconceivable," and is most commonly applied to those who surrender themselves to monstrosities of fashion. This application of the terms arose in France at the end of the last century, when head-dresses were piled up to such a height that the spectators marveled how the structure was built up. Crinoline-wearers—if such there be—are the modern equivalents of these incroyables; and the word is being used in this connection.

C. R. M.—Aneurism is much more common in some arteries than others, but any artery of the body is liable to it. Surgeons use the term to signify an enlargement arising from the distension of an artery, causing the diseased part to form a bag or tumor. This bag enlarges and the diseased walls of the artery distend. The cure of an aneurism is effected by passing a ligature around the sound portion of the vessel at some distance above the locality of the tumor. Works on surgery give ample instructions on the subject.

D. L. C.—Strictly speaking, and according to modern usage, a pair is only two of a kind. But formerly it meant any number of things of the same kind used together, and was analogous to set, pack, flight or string; as a pair of chessmen, for a set of chessmen; a pair of cards, for a pack of cards; a pair of stairs, for a flight of stairs; a pair of beads, for a string of beads. There are four boxing gloves in a set, and they are still spoken of as a pair of boxing gloves by many who use them, just as some persons still say a pair of stairs, instead of a flight of stairs.

U. R.—The modern system of punctuation consisted at first of only one point, used in three ways, and sometimes of a stroke, formed in several ways. But as no particular rules were followed in the use of these signs, punctuation was exceedingly uncertain, until the end of the fifteenth century, when the learned Venetian printers, the Manutii, increased the number of the signs, and established some fixed rules for their application. These were so generally adopted that we may consider the Manutii as the inventors of the present method of punctuation; and although modern grammarians have introduced some improvements, nothing but a few particular rules have been added since their time.

STUDENT.—We suppose that by stammering you do not mean the specific defect of repeating a consonant, but a general hesitancy and confusion. You certainly ought to cure that, for you write clearly enough. Practice short flights of conversation in which you can see the end of a speech from the beginning. It is an admirable rule in talk, as in oratory, always to have our "finish" ready, for you never know when you may want it. You cannot become confused and rambling if you think beforehand of what you are going to say, and then use the fewest possible words. Inability to think while talking is quite a common weakness, so think before you talk, and then say what you have thought from memory; you will thus get into a habit of compact thinking and concise speech, and success will give you confidence.

CURIOUS.—The materials used in the manufacture of white soaps are generally olive-oil and carbonate of soda; the latter is rendered caustic by the operation of quick-lime, and the solution thus obtained is called soap-lye; the oil and a weak lye are first boiled together, and portions of stronger lye are gradually added till the soap, produced by the mutual action of the oil and alkalis, begins tenacious and to separate from water; some common salt is then generally added to promote the granulation and perfect separation of the soap; the fire is then drawn, and the contents of the boiler allowed to remain for some hours at rest, so that the soap may more completely collect; when it is perfect, it is put into wooden frames or mould, and, when stiff enough to be handled, it is cut into oblong slices and dried in an airy room.

BEAUTIFUL NIGHT.

BY J. B. G.

Beautiful night! soul-charming night!
In thy calm silence oh how I delight!
When the bright stars grid the skies far away,
Then could I worship thee more than the day.
The sun has gone down to his home in the west,
And nature, a-weary, is sinking to rest;
Glistening with due, in thy radiance bright,
Soon will the flowers be, beautiful night!

Beautiful night! star-spangled night!
Thou art, as ever, the poet's delight!
When thy fair queen sheds her silvery beams,
Then may he revel in fairy-like dreams.
Morn hath its charms for the young and the free,
Noontide its joys for the wild honey bee.
Eve's gentle shade may young lovers invite,
But give me, oh, give me the star-spangled night!

Imposters?

BY S. U. W.

PEALS of ringing laughter filled all the room, such laughter as comes only from hearts without a care; and when from sheer exhaustion it died away, Elizabeth Vaughan tried to make herself heard.

"Girls, do listen; the week is up to-day, and I must send our answer to Mr. Hinton; what am I to say?"

"I know I shall never be able to do it, Bessie; I had better give it up at once. Aunt Maria must have been crazy to think of such a thing! what do you say, Phil?"

"I am not sure it is right for us to try, but I am sick of being poor."

"Aunt Maria tells us the reason for her stipulation, and you must remember she had a perfect right to leave her money as she chose; if you two don't wish to fulfil the condition, why, we shall be no worse off than we were before, obliged to count every penny, and the Grants will have the chance given them."

"Horrid creatures? They have more than they know what to do with already! Read over that bit again, Betty, there's a dear."

"When I was quite young, very nice-looking, and a wealthy heiress, I became engaged to ——, several years older than myself, and apparently of independent means. All went well until one day Furton's Bank failed, in whose shares most of my money had been put. Almost as soon as the news appeared in the papers I had a letter from ——, full of hypocrisy and palaver, but plainly letting me see it was my money that was desired, not myself. Of course, I at once gave him his freedom, and then he had the pleasure of hearing that owing to timely warning all my shares had been realized, and the money invested safely again before the smash came. Then he cringed—no other word will do—and this is why I want to save you three orphan girls from the same sad experience, and I hope you will humor an old maid's whim, which, after all, is only to last six short months.

"You may safely trust Mr. Hinton, and your own old servant; otherwise, the secret must be kept to yourselves."

"Well, girls?"

"We shall have to try, I suppose, but I draw the line at false teeth, so I tell you! Write your letter, Lizzie, and then we'll settle the programme of as wild a scheme as I ever heard tell of. I'll go and take a turn with Mr. Leslie to pass away the time; he's only just below."

"Well, don't you tell him, Cicely, mind."

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"Old Miss Hayton's house is being cleaned up, ma'am; new blinds, fresh curtains, and two gardeners hard at work, and the postman says the ladies are expected to-night. After being empty all these months it will be pleasant like to have neighbors again. How many nieces would there be now, ma'am, should you say?"

"Indeed, Hannah, I've no idea; Miss Hayton always kept her concerns to herself; time will show! Perhaps Mrs. Arnold will know—I'm to have tea there to-day."

"Mr. Hugh rode by an hour ago; he does look bothered, and I hear he and Deacon marked a lot more trees Saturday. It seems a pity."

"A rich wife would be his best chance, Hannah; perhaps one of the Miss Haytons may suit."

The evening shadows were falling long that June afternoon, when a heavily-laden fly left the station of Rushleigh and crawled slowly out of the little town on the direct road to old Miss Hayton's comfortable home. The luggage was marked with many foreign labels, and was rather a medley. Many curious glances fell on the slowly-creeping vehicle, but beyond the fact that four females and a parrot took up the inside the gossipmongers were disappointed. At last, after many a jolt and jar, the old machine drew up with as imposing an air as it could manage before Hope House; the steps were let down, and the ladies descended.

The first to alight was tall and dignified-looking, with snowy hair and spectacles, the second had her hair in rolls on either side of her face; she used a stick in walking, on which she leant heavily; the third wore a front, openly and unmistakeably, and all three had dark shadows under their eyes, and lines and wrinkles on their faces.

An old servant, who seemed far more lively and energetic than any of her mistresses, hopped briskly about here, there, and everywhere, ordering the women-servants about with right good will. On arrival they went early to their rooms, and none of them appeared until twelve o'clock next day, when they went over the house, and interviewed the servants, and for the next few days busied themselves in re-arranging the rooms.

Then came an afternoon, when with their lace caps and mittens on they sat in the carefully-shaded drawing-room ready for visitors.

The parrot seemed a great pet; he was placed in a very conspicuous position close to Miss Hayton's low chair. Some half-done knitting lay in her lap, under which an open book peeped out.

Miss Philippa seemed lost in the paper, and Miss Cicely was trying various pens on a bit of paper.

"I have done it at last; if I use an etching pen my great sprawling fist looks quite Italian, else I really should have had to give up letters for the present. Oh, Elizabeth my dear, you look quite angelic! There!!! I heard a bell, I do believe."

The visitors came in constant succession; all the folks in the neighborhood flocked to welcome the rich Miss Hayton's nieces. Some drove in from long distances, and waited whilst their horses rested; others living close by stayed to make the most of the occasion, and it was not until dinner time that the last visitor departed.

The ladies looked quite flushed as they sat over their dessert, and, free from the servants' watchful eyes, talked over the afternoon.

"Mrs. Arnold has a good face, and she spoke so nicely of Aunt Maria. She said she had lost such a kind friend, and she hoped we would let her help us in any way she could. But my dears! she's younger than we are. Do you think we could adopt her son?—he was Aunt Maria's godson—quite a child now, only twenty-five! It seems to me it would be very suitable, and rather amusing."

"Cicely, how you do run on! I sat on thorns when you began to chatter so fast to that shy young clergyman. Once you actually laughed, and I saw how surprised old Miss Evans looked. Do be careful, I beg."

"I like you talking like that, E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h, my dear, you were nearly caught when Mr. Cookson asked where we had lived before. Zermatt is not quite the place for elderly ladies to reside for any time."

"Cicely, did you hear that mannish young person telling me that a Mr. Arthur Leslie was coming to them next week. What if it should be your friend?"

"Oh! good gracious! I never thought of that! What shall I do?"

"Don't worry yourself. You can't play tennis or golf, and as for riding, give it up with a good grace. Tea-parties will be our line, you'll see."

"Well, I always thought a little play-acting would be rather fun, but this passes a joke."

"Aunt Maria knew all the people about thoroughly, and she must have had some very good reason for making such a point of our residing here all the six months."

"The visitors I liked least were Sir John Godsell and his two sons. How loud they talked, and they looked so bold and insolent, and not one good word had they for man or woman."

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Hugh Arnold leant in a brown study on the back of an old chair, gazing out over the wide park-lands that stretched away in front of the flower-decked terrace below. The timber must once have been very fine, but of late the woodman's axe had caused many a blank in the clumps dotted all about.

Inside, the furniture was quaint and faded, an old-world air over all; but that careful hands had bestowed the goods and chattels to the best advantage was very evident.

Mrs. Arnold's soft hand on his shoulder roused her son from his dream. "Any fresh bother, Hugh?"

"Only a continuation of the old, little mother. Deacon wants me to sell the Home Farm. We can hear of no likely tenant—he thinks he can get a fair price for it, and we can't cut down any more timber without spoiling the place."

"I wish you'd take some of my jewels. This ceaseless trouble about money is making you an old man before your time!"

"Never mind, mother, no one could tell that that American Company would go to smash, just as we were getting clear, too. But there—talking won't mend matters. We must live somewhere, and, thanks to you, we could hardly do it more cheaply than this last year, though I hate to think of all you have had to go without."

"It has only been a pleasure to me, and that you know well."

"What do you think of our new neighbors? A nice wife for me, eh! with money bags, too. Ah!" as a conscious look stole over Mrs. Arnold's face, "didn't I know it just? Which one is it to be, mother? and is she dark—fair—or nondescript?"

"I was rather surprised to find them quite elderly; but they are well preserved, and their complexions look quite soft and young, and they were all three beautifully dressed. I hardly recognised the drawing-room, it was so tastefully arranged. Still I had thought to find them quite girls."

"Ah! ah! so I thought, you old match-maker. But what would you think of me if I had gone in for one of the heiresses, just for the sake of those same money-bags?"

"I know you couldn't have done such a thing if you had not cared for her as well, but there's no chance for you now."

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Time passed on—the limits of this story will not allow space to mention how often and often the sisters nearly betrayed themselves; how irksome and tedious their daily getting up became, the severe task it proved to them, to act up to their apparent years, and the daily—nay, more truly hourly, watchful, ceaseless guard required alike on words and actions.

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"Cicely, what ails you? In bed at eight o'clock?"

"I can't help it, Bessie, and so there. It's all that horrid girl. Why, I hardly spoke to Mr. Leslie, and you know what friends we were."

"Were, dear yes! as Cicely Vaughan, but not as Cicely Hayton, remember. Tell me what has vexed you so."

"Well, you know how dull we all find these afternoon parties, where we are expected to sit glued to our chairs and thankfully accept tea and cakes from elderly men too old to play, and far too toothless to talk. I was just walking a few yards with Mr. Leslie, who though I may be, does not seem to find it quite such a bore as some do, to talk for a few minutes, when up came with a rush that hateful girl. "Do take a seat, dear Miss Hayton, you must be so tired. Mr. Leslie, will you play with me?" And then again, when their match was over, and he offered to get me some claret-cup, she interferes again, and sends him tearing to fetch her sunshade, or her racquet, or some rubbish, horrid creature!"

"Cicely, you don't deserve to be told that I heard him talking of his foreign trip with Mrs. Anstruther, and he said he had liked Zermatt best of all, for he had made friends with some nice English girls whom he hoped soon to meet again! Now go to sleep and don't worry over Gertrude Clayton."

"What did Mrs. Arnold say that made you smile so, Betty?"

"She said she and her son felt so greatly obliged to us for renting the Home Farm from them on such liberal terms, as they had been afraid their only chance was to sell it. Now, Cicely, we are going to dine there to-morrow, mind you get yourself up all right." . . . . .

"Miss Cicely is very feverish this morning, Miss Elizabeth, I think it must be influenza."

"Oh, Nannie, don't mention the word, whatever should we do? It never entered me head that we should want a doctor! Can't we coosot her up between us?"

"Well, Miss, we can try, but her skin is like a hot coal, and her head is dreadful, I don't like her looks at all."

By evening Cicely was so bad that sending for a doctor was a matter of necessity, for she was quite light-headed and very restless.

Dr. Burton was away, but his locum tenens was soon on the scene, and he said positively it was influenza of a severe type.

In a close-frilled night-cap, with shaded lights all about, Cicely looked very small and fragile, but the doctor did not stay more than a few minutes, as he said he had a very urgent case on hand, and nursing was really what Miss Hayton needed.

The weather set in very wet and chilly, for it was now well on in October, and it seemed as if Cicely's example was to be generally followed, for case after case rapidly occurred, until whole families were laid low; then, as Cicely recovered, the villagers got very well accustomed to the two elder sisters' gentle presence. Very sisters of mercy did they prove themselves in the sad time that followed when the dark angel's shadow fell on many a neighbor's home.

Those who had made most fun of the old ladies, and openly calculated how they would leave their money,—now—in their hour of need were thankful for the beautiful fruit and the good soup, and most of all for the personal sympathy bestowed on them, and when the epidemic had died out, the sisters seemed to be trusted and loved by all.

Then somehow a rumor began to spread—who started it first no one knew—that there was something wrong.

Soon it got about that a lady visitor on opening an album at Hope House came on some photos bearing the Christian names of the heiresses, taken only last year; presently it was openly stated that the Miss Haytons were impostors, and, angry and disgusted, the neighborhood sent them to Coventry, whilst sinister hints of proceedings to be taken against them became common talk.

In vain Mrs. Arnold tried to stop the gossip, and h r son stood up for the ladies fearlessly and frequently;—the fraud had been found out, said the wiseacres, and now they must bear the consequences.

The sisters felt this trouble very much. Sometimes they thought they must give in—lose their fortunes and depart; but November was half over—one month more, and the story could be told.

One day the second post brought them quite a budget. Elizabeth received a letter from the lawyer, telling them for the first time how Miss Hayton had wished their disguise abandoned, and suggesting that, if all went well, Christmas Eve should be selected for this grand event.

It was a nice letter, saying how sure he was that humoring the old lady's whim had been no light matter for them; indeed, when first he made their acquaintance, he had doubted much if it was possible for them so to forget their youth for what he knew they must have found six long months.

"I knew from my old client herself how much she hoped you three would earn her money; and again and again I begged her to think of some other stipulation: but she said that with property being will d to heirs only as long as the testator's body remained above ground, or valuable lands left only as long as the inheritor daily drove certain horses, it was impossible for her to think of anything more original, and what was more, she would not. If her nieces did not care to have her property as she chose, then they had only to leave it. All arrangements for Christmas Eve I must of course make with you, and I shall hope to be your guest on that occasion, and have the pleasure of seeing you all in your proper persons, so to say."

Philippa had a letter from Mrs. Anstruther, who had taken a house at the seaside for a few months, and when she could speak for laughing she read out the contents.

"The house is a nice one in many ways, but our sitting-rooms are very small, also our bedrooms; but this matters the less, as the kitchens and t e bedrooms I have given the servants are very large, light and airy. Our beds are dreadful, but the maids said, unless they had feather beds or springs, they could not possibly think of staying; so what could I do but give up ours? There are none to be hired in Shawiford.

"We always dine early here, as the servants objected to washing up in the evening, when they wished to get the benefit of the sea air; and for the same reason we are rather late in the morning. Our meals are very plain—just roast and boiled—I wonder Frederick puts up with them; but whatever I order, something much plainer appears, always with excellent excuses for the alterations as sauce. But there! I

must not bore you further, etc., etc."

Cicely got very red over her letter, and then threw it on the floor in a passion. It was from her pet aversion, Gertrude Clayton, who announced her engagement to Mr. Leslie, concluding her scrawl with saying how sorry she felt for her old friends, to have had such a nasty letter in the local paper about them.

It was quite evident that the writer was simply enchanted to be able to have such a fling at them, for else the acquaintanceship was so slight t' ere was not the faintest need for her to have written at all.

The sisters were horrified to think they should be mentioned, even in such a little third-rate paper as the "Rushleigh Organ," and seizing the unopened sheets, hunted till they found the paragraph alluded to, under the title of

"THE LOCAL MYSTERY.

UNVEILING A FRAUD!"

By hints and innuendoes it was implied that impostors were about—householders were warned to be careful—the mischief might be wide-spread, etc., etc.

Then underneath came the notice of a grand concert, to be held at the end of the week, at which two of the suspected parties had promised to assist, little knowing, said the paper, how largely this fact had helped the sale of the tickets. A little mystery went such a long way.

Who likes anonymous letters in any shape or form? Printed or written, they have a power of their own to rankle and fester almost unequalled, and though true dignity of course consists in taking no notice, human nature is very weak, and the sting remains.

At first Elizabeth and Cicely said nothing should induce them to play their duet, or show themselves at all at the concert. Then they saw the paper had been posted to them, directed in Gertrude Clayton's writing, else it was one they never saw; so their pride came to their rescue, and they agreed to fulfil their engagement. Indeed, at such short notice it would have been almost hopeless to find a substitute, as both were such first-rate musicians.

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The concert-room was very hot, and greatly overcrowded, and when the sisters stepped on the small stage, a perfect sea of faces swam before them. They had timed their arrival well, so as only to have a few minutes in the waiting-room beforehand.

In the instant of coming forward and bowing, Cicely saw a man sitting beside Gertrude Clayton and bending over her in a most devoted style, whilst Arthur Leslie sat quite away, near the Arnolds, who were almost in the front. Their presence comforted Elizabeth much, as they were now great friends, and thus, both feeling happier and more cheerful than they had expected, they took their places and began.

The most impatient person must have listened to such music; it was not often Rushleigh Hall heard the like, and there was a minute's silence when the last chord was struck: then Hugh Arnold began to clap, and in one minute the hall seemed filled up to the very roof with hisses—hisses like serpents that curled and twisted, and began again and again—hisses that drowned the cries of "Shame—Shame!" Hisses from folks they had counted friends, from those they had tried to help—nay, even from those they had nursed!

One minute spell-bound the ladies stood alone, then with a swift rush and spring, Hugh Arnold, Arthur Leslie, and Dr. Lennox had gained the platform and offered their arms to the ladies. None too soon either, Cicely was shaking like an aspen leaf, and Elizabeth, after tottering slightly, fell right into Hugh's arms as he stood beside her; but in a minute she was on the sofa in the waiting-room, and he was back on the platform, and facing the people with a very determined expression, only uttered clearly and distinctly the one word "Cowards!" and was gone. The sisters were so upset that night, they could not even talk the matter over, and retired to bed very sad.

Next day they consulted over it, and counted up the days that yet remained till Christmas.

If they went away now at almost the end of their penance, the inheritance was lost; yet it needed the vivid memory of their struggling days, when their endeavor had been to keep out of debt, by denying themselves in every way, to give them strength to persevere.

"Now I feel there was really a grain of sense, the first I ever could see in Aunt Maria's plan; for certainly else we should never have found out the true from the false," said Cicely tearfully, "but I always said I didn't know if the disguise was right, and now I doubt 't more than ever."

"Cicely, did you notice that my wig was all askew when I came home, and some of the grease-paint had trickled down my face, from the water some one sprinkled over me?"

"Oh, my good creature, no one had time or inclination to think of such a trifle, don't worry over that. My greatest comfort lies in the thought that in a fortnight more, we may shake off the dust of Rushleigh from our feet, and never return unless we like! At present I feel as if that date would be far distant. And now let us set our minds to play out the last scene well!"

"Well, Nannie, what do you want?"

"I thought you ladies might not have heard that several of Mr. Arnold's ricks were fired last night, and some men were heard to say as they left the Town Hall last night, they'd teach him to call them cowards again."

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The spirit of evil and mischief had a busy time during the next fortnight, and in every way that was possible the idle men of the place made Hugh Arnold pay heavily for his championship of the ladies by acts of petty spite quite beneath notice, and yet none the less annoying.

One night he was driving home late from the station, when, as he passed the last public-house in the High Street, a band of tipsy rollicking men came out, and seeing by the gas-light who occupied the dog-cart, began singing in loud and mocking tones the last verse of "The Three Old Maids of Lee." Louder and louder waxed the voices, then something whizzed through the air with a whistling sound, struck sharp on the horse's flank; one instant the creature stopped dead, then with ears laid flat, and bit well between his teeth, was off with the clattering stones, in headlong, heedless flight.

The night was dark, the road was rough, how it all happened was never quite made out, but when some scattered bystanders after hard running at last came up with the runaway dog-cart, a dark heap of man—horse—and broken cart lay right in the hedge. The groom must have fallen out first, for he did not make one of the tragic group.

The horse was dead, he had staked himself, poor beast, and at first all thought his master was so too, but when at length they got him free from under the debris that half stifled him they found he was still breathing, though badly injured.

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Hope House was illuminated from top to bottom, outside and in, and crowds of guests kept pouring in from all quarters.

The people of Rushleigh were there in great numbers—shame for their behavior to the ladies had not obliged their consciences to decline seeing the theatricals that evening.

That a London company had been secured and no expense spared, had leaked out long ago; and now whilst a military band played old familiar airs, the audience waited in expectation of what was to follow.

Mr. Hinton showed all the people to their seats, and in a temporary gallery put up on purpose the tradespeople and villagers found ample accommodation.

Mrs. Arnold came in alone, her sad, gentle face reminding all of the peril her only son had so recently been in.

When the short play began, everyone's attention was riveted on the stage, and very shortly all grasped the fact that a real life story, part only of which was known them, was being played out there—in dumb show indeed, but every gesture and action full of speech and power.

Then the interest became so keen, that the silence seemed intense, the very air full of sympathetic mystery.

Tears rolled down several faces unchecked as one or two of the pathetic bits of the young sisters' s ruggling life was skilfully introduced: in spirit they followed them in their resolution to win their aunt's money—saw them having lessons in Paris how to get themselves suitably up—felt what a weariness the day's toilette must have been—how irksome and fidgetting to young spirits the long pretence of age and staidness had become.

Mr. Hinton had tried to get the sisters to allow the concert-room scene introduced, but they would not hear of it; so after their first reception at Hope House, there was a long and impressive pause. Then an illuminated calendar suddenly marched in, and when July, August, September, October, November had slowly glided away with fading lights, December suddenly divided in half, and as the rightful heiresses of Miss Hayton's wealth, the three sisters—visible for the first time on the stage, and also for the first time to their neighbors without any wigs or wrinkles—stood forth in the sight of all, holding a long glittering motto—"A Happy Christmas to all."

One minute thus they stood, and then the curtain dropped, the play was over. Cheers long and loud filled all the room, the very lips that had so lately joined in hisses, now helped to swell the shouts and hurrahs that rang to the very echo, drowning the band as they struck up the National Anthem.

Mr. Hinton had wished to make a few scathing remarks, but he kept his tongue between his teeth, feeling in his own heart convinced that the humiliation of some and the disgust of others were better punishments than his angry words could produce: but he let it clearly be understood that the ladies were going abroad almost at once, and it would probably be long ere they returned.

The light of a great surprise shone over Arthur Leslie's face as he grasped Cicely's hand in his, and he could only repeat:

"To think I never guessed, dolt that I was, and I've been trying to track you again and again."

A puzzled look from Cicely made him pause in his eager words—"Surely Miss Clayton expects you?"

"Me!—Herbert you mean, poor wretch! his fetters are clanking already; what he could see in the girl I can't think, selfish creature!"

Elizabeth's last words were all for Mr. Arnold, who seemed so excited that it might have been a personal cause of gratification to her; and late though it was, when at last she reached home, she could not sleep till she had told Hugh, whose surprise was as great as her own; and as he said, the one who had gone nearest the truth was poor Dr. Lennox, who still blamed himself sadly for having caused innocently enough some of the late unpleasantness by laughingly remarking at the time of the influenza, that Miss Cicely Hayton had surely made a mistake in the certificate of her birth.

"But," added Hugh gravely, "I think, little mother, we have all cause for thankfulness that we did not find out the truth before those poor girls had finished their strange and trying penance."

"Hugh, I have promised Elizabeth to pay them a little visit abroad as soon as you are well again, and her last message was that a welcome awaited you also."

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The Christmas bells rang out in the clear frosty air, and while the sisters knelt in the old church of Rushleigh, bitterness and enmity were far from their thoughts, as they remembered in thankfulness the penance ended, and the grim wolf Want driven for ever from throwing his haunting shadow over them.

As Mr. Hinton watched the three young faces he saw how heavy the strain had proved, what an anxious, guarded look had become habitual to them all, how unstrung and nervous they seemed, and he wondered more than ever at the courage and perseverance they had displayed in persisting to the end.

Friends for life they had most certainly made, and unless he prophesied wrongly, a happy future lay before them.

Westbrook Hall.

BY M. C. V.

SO THE Trescott estate has found a purchaser at last, eh?" said Mr. Barnes to his neighbor, Mr. Renshaw.

"Why, you don't say so, neighbor Barnes!" replied the other, as he leaned upon his gate. "How did you hear? and who is the purchaser?"

"Yes, I do say so, and I expect it's true, too," said Mr. Barnes. "I first heard of it in the village, and afterwards I called in at Lawyer Sharp's, and he told me that he had been employed in making out the writings. He says the widow has made a first-rate bargain."

"Ah, well. Truly I am rejoiced to hear of my neighbor Mrs. Trescott's good fortune," said Mr. Renshaw. "Who did you say was the purchaser?"

"Lawyer Sharp says his name is Westbrook. He's mighty rich, and already talking of great improvements—pulling down the old house and building a mansion, laying out a park and gardens, something like a great nobleman's seat. And the strangest thing of all is that he is quite a young man, ain't married; so what he can want of a large house, and a lot of people to wait on him, I can't tell. I expect he'll be turning all the girls' heads, eh, Melissa?"

This remark was addressed to Mr. Renshaw's daughter, who had followed her father to the gate, and had been an interested listener to the concluding portion of the conversation.

"Go into the house, my daughter," said her father, gravely, turning upon the girl a look as stern as it was possible for his mild features to wear. "It is hardly seemly for a young maiden to listen to the conversation of her father and his neighbor."

"Why so, father? I didn't suppose you would talk about anything I mightn't hear," said Melissa; then, seeing that her father seemed really displeased, she put up her lips for a kiss, and retreated into the house. One might have seen, by the smile that followed her, that she had made her peace.

Neighbor Barnes's story was all true. Harley Westbrook, a rich young man, had bought the Trescott place, and was going to fit it up to suit his fancy. It took him a year to do it; at the end of which time his new mansion was finished, his grounds had been laid out and adorned, his name and his face had become familiar in Allendale, his household had been established on a magnificent scale, and now the whole affair was to be wound up by a real, old-fashioned house-warming, to which every family in the neighborhood at all eligible had been invited, and all of whom were going to be present on the memorable occasion.

Mr. Renshaw's farm joined the Westbrook property, and the young proprietor had long since made the acquaintance of the good man and his family. He had sat upon the porch with the farmer, and watched the smoke curling from his pipe, and listened, with a strange feeling of interest, to the shrewd remarks of his hospitable entertainer, wondering how, amid the rural scenes and occupations of his life, he had been able to store his mind with so much of practical and truly Christian philosophy.

He had sat, also, at Mrs. Renshaw's table, and partaken of its substantial country luxuries, and feasted his eyes, meantime, upon the blushing cheeks of Melissa, whom he had long since determined, in his own mind, to be far the loveliest girl in Allendale. He had also been surprised to find in the rustic beauty, as he denominated her, a fund of strong good sense, like her father's, but added to that, and her mother's warm benevolence of character, the elevating influences of a most excellent education; for Melissa being the only child of the wealthy farmer, he, with a true appreciation of mental culture, had sent her to the best schools, and provided for her education in all useful branches, as well as the lighter accomplishments.

Melissa had first blushed in the presence of Mr. Westbrook, as one blushes under the gaze of a superior; but long before the completion of the mansion, the throbbing of her own heart, caused by the consciousness of his admiration and her own regard, would send the rich color flashing over her fair cheek as his footstep was heard without, or his shadow fell within the porch.

All her dreams of romance were verified in Westbrook. The stately form, the proud head, the handsome, thought-lit features, the quiet deference of manner and instinctive courtesy, were all characteristics of her dream-hero. And tone, and look, and that subtle magnetism which sends its currents silently but with power from heart to heart, told her she was loved as well, and had no need to hide her head in maidenly shame at having given unsought the precious jewel of her affection.

And joyful but timid Melissa stood alone in her chamber, and completed, before her little mirror, her simple adornments on the evening of the party. Something had whispered to her all day that this evening was to decide her fate, and the thought called up the vivid blush that burned upon her cheek, and gave the beautiful brilliancy to her eyes, over which the lashes would droop with timid joy, as the thoughts and hopes of happiness that filled her heart took definite form in her anticipations.

Very beautiful she looked, as, in answer to her mother's summons, she descended to the sitting-room where her parents awaited her. The snowy, light folds of her muslin dress fell round a figure of more than ordinary height and exquisite proportions, the bands of her sunny chestnut hair were glossy as satin, and above her smooth low brow she had laid lightly a coronal of green leaves and the soft feathery clusters of the "virgin's bower." Both her parents looked upon her with delight; and even her father, prosaic as he was, could not help acknowledging that she

was quite lovely enough to be the bride of Mr. Westbrook. He had noticed Westbrook's evident admiration, and had formed plans for removing Melissa from its influence for a season, unless her lover should soon make known his desire to make her his wife. Of this, however, he had said nothing to his wife or daughter, and little guessed the emotions that surged through the heart of the latter, as she rode by his side toward Westbrook Hall.

Within that stately mansion was light and radiance and beauty that night. Everybody was happy. The young proprietor glided thro the different rooms, bestowing upon all alike his attentions and smiles, and playing his part with the exquisite tact of a practiced man of the world and a kindly-disposed host. It was not until late in the evening that he found leisure to exchange a word unobserved with Melissa. He found her alone and pensive in the music room, whence the occupants had just retreated at some sudden announcement of interest in another apartment. There was a slight feeling of neglect, that tried her heart sorely, for elsewhere she had been the chief object of Westbrook's attentions; but she was reproving herself for her unworthy suspicions, when he came behind her as she sat, and challenged her, in gay tones, for her thought.

The glad smile with which she glanced up into his face contained a whole volume of enlightenment to the lover. He threw himself down beside her upon the low couch on which she sat; his gay tone vanished; a deep seriousness spread over his expressive features; and, in a voice tremulous with emotion, he told the story of his love, and besought a return.

Melissa Renshaw parted from her betrothed husband at a late hour, and returned home in a tumult of happiness. And afterwards, for a few weeks, she met him in his daily visits, walked by his side through grove and park, or sat beside him at her father's fireside, in a dream of bliss, never once foreseeing change or sorrow.

Nevertheless, sorrow came. The old farmer heard whispers of potations long and deep at Westbrook's table; of orgies with his friends who, from time to time, claimed his hospitality; of ungovernable fury, when, under the maddening influence of wine, a servant or a friend dared to oppose his slightest wish. He trembled for his daughter, and often remonstrated with the unhappy young man. And Westbrook would promise reform, and the credulous parent would believe his vows, and still, for his child's sake, hope.

Suddenly Westbrook was called from home by urgent business, which detained him for some weeks. Before his return, Mrs. Renshaw sickened, and after a short but severe illness died, and Westbrook returned to find his betrothed plunged into the depths of grief, mourning and prostrate beneath the burden of her first great sorrow.

She refused to be comforted, and for weeks not even the caresses of her lover, nor his warmest entreaties, could rouse her from the apathy into which she had fallen. Thus it happened that the expected marriage was delayed, and Westbrook, striving to drown his disappointment in the wine-cup, fell swiftly and suddenly into the abyss of shame and degradation that had so long yawned at his feet.

Melissa was at length roused by the fact becoming apparent even to her, that her lover was a drunkard. For a time she labored faithfully and patiently to restore him to himself and his manhood, but in vain. The habit, once yielded to, had become uncontrollable. He was no longer himself, but the bond-slave of the cup. He became a wanderer upon the face of the earth. He lost character, self-respect, station, and property. His fine estate, his beautiful mansion, passed into other hands, and but that the mansion still retained his name, it and his shameful drunkard's death abroad would have been forgotten in Avendale: forgotten by all save one, that patient, uncomplaining woman, whose joyless life, as years stole on and bowed her form and blighted her beauty, had no compensation save a father's love and that divine blessedness which Heaven distils even from the bitterest griefs of a true Christian heart.

Two men comfortably attired, attracted much attention in City Hall Park, New York city, recently, by walking about with large signs attached to them bearing this inscription: "We want work of any kind." They found almost immediate employment with a kind pedestrian.

An honest man pays up. The other kind has to pay down.

EXAGGERATION.

Some persons are so constituted that they can scarcely open their mouths without allowing exaggerations to escape from them. There is, for instance, the impulsive person who is addicted to the use of superlatives. "That is the nicest girl I ever met," says Jones of, perhaps, half-a-dozen different girls in the course of a single week. In the same way he assures his friends that each new book he happens to chance upon is either the "worst" or the "best" he ever read.

I sometimes ask myself of how many words the average English-speaking person's vocabulary consists. The number must be very limited. Nothing else can explain the fact that so many people have what may be called "stock phrases." The use which they make of these stock phrases is but another form of exaggeration.

Some time ago I "sat under" a clergyman who was addicted, in his sermons, to the use of the phrase, "most vital question." Some would think that there could be but one "most vital question." He thought otherwise. According to him the phrase was a sort of compound noun of multitude. He would touch upon half-a-dozen different topics, each of which was apt to be a "most vital question." In fact, I doubt if he often touched upon a topic which was not a "most vital question." That, by showing an almost cynical disregard for the just value and meaning of words, he might be showing his congregation an example of what looked very like wilful exaggeration, was, I feel sure, a reflection which never occurred to him.

If you were to tell Major Pikestaff that he habitually exaggerates, I am inclined to think that there would be something approximating to an argument. And yet I do not believe that I exaggerate when I say that possibly a hundred times a day the gallant Major declares that something or other is a "most extraordinary thing." "Most extraordinary thing—just met Porter on the pier." "Most extraordinary thing—last night I had no trumps two hands running." "Most extraordinary thing—our cat has kittens." I do not know how many "most extraordinary things" Pikestaff imagines that this world contains, but I do know that he never suspects that he exaggerates.

Nor do I think that Miss Mawle has a notion that she exaggerates when she speaks of so many things being a "perfect providence." "It was a perfect providence that we fixed the treat for Tuesday." "It was a perfect providence that I was in when Mrs. Trueman called." "It was a perfect providence that I brought my purse."

Of course, the Ropers are right. It is to be wished that all parents were equally careful in checking any tendency towards exaggeration which their children may evince. It is painful to see how many children do exaggerate. And it is such a dreadful thing, especially in the young. In the old we do not notice it so much. Though some observations made both by Mr. and Mrs. Roper, when Tommy and Clara were not present, struck me, judged by their own standard, as being rather odd.

It was at dinner. Soup was served. Mr. Roper took a spoonful.

"I see, Mrs. Roper, that your cook wishes to poison me again. This isn't soup."

"My dear, it's only a little too salt."

"A little too salt! I should think she's put all the salt in the parish into it. It's nothing but salt."

Mrs. Roper turned to me, when the servant had taken the tureen out of the room.

"What trials servants are! There are no good servants nowadays, absolutely none. As for a good cook—there isn't such a thing."

I feel that it is, perhaps, a little unfortunate that Mr. and Mrs. Roper are not, in their turn, possessed of parents willing and able to correct any slight exaggerations of which they may be guilty.

Exaggeration is a good deal a question of mood. In some moods we exaggerate more than in others. It is, probably, no exaggeration to say that every man exaggerates when he loses his temper; and, at least, equally may this be said of every woman. Hawkins is, in his normal condition, a capital fellow; careful of speech, slow to wound another person's feelings. But he is the more or less proud owner of a temper. If there were such a thing as a Lost Property Office for Tempers, on six days out of seven one might confidently reckon on finding Hawkins' temper there. It is seldom in its owner's keeping; and when it is not in its owner's keeping he scarcely ever speaks without resorting to exaggeration. Everything is, on those occasions, against him. All is for the worst in this worst of all possible worlds. The clerks in his office are made to feel this particularly. If one of them omits to dot an "i," he is made to feel that he has been guilty of a crime which, regarded from the most merciful point of view, is equal to murder. Of the appalling weight of testimony which his wife and children could give of the husband's, and the father's, capacity for exaggeration one is afraid to think.

Again, who does not know how Mrs. Griffin can exaggerate—and she does exaggerate when her temper is lost, stolen, or strayed. And do you remember what things Miss Ayh and Miss Bee said of each other when they, as it were, fell out upon the way? In what exaggerations they indulged! And when those two charming sisters, Clara and Emily Roper, quarrel—as they do, perhaps twice or thrice a day—what shocking exaggerations they permit themselves to use!

Dyspepsia lends itself to exaggeration just as much as the good digestion which waits on appetite. The pessimist, like the optimist, has a natural bend towards exaggeration. The world contains both good and evil. If you average it up you will find that it is essentially a world of semi-tones, of compromise. The pessimist, who sees nothing in it but bad, exaggerates in about the same degree as the optimist, who sees in it nothing but good. He who is starving can see nothing but suffering, crime, misery. He who has dined well, and whose digestion is as good as his dinner, is apt to be certain that life is a perpetual feast.

Faddists are the masters of the Ignoble Art of Exaggeration. If one wishes to avoid exaggeration, one is careful to measure one's speech; one is never in extremes. Faddists seldom measure their speech; they are almost invariably in extremes. Teetotalers; anti-smokers; anti-vaccinators; anti-everythingites; are all among the worst of exaggerators.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

According to Dr. T. H. Parke, the genuine pygmy races, about whom we possess reliable information, are the Batwas, discovered in 1886 by Dr. Ludwig Wolf, occupying the Sankuru region, in the mid-Congo basin; the Mkaba tribe, near Lake Akkas, of Central Africa, with whom Emin Pasha's people would connect the dwarfs of the Central Forest. Of these the average height has been respectively reported to be: The Mkaba, 4 feet 1 inch; the Batwas, 4 feet 3 inches, and the Akkas, 4 feet 10 inches.

One of the greatest living authorities on earthquakes, Professor John Milne, of the Japanese Imperial University, in a recent article in the "Seismological Magazine," July, says that the results of experiments and investigation on a possible connection between earthquakes and magnetic and electric phenomena do not allow us to admit any such connection. It is not likely that earthquakes ever result from electrical disturbances, and it has not yet been proved that they ever give rise to any such, though when large masses of rock are displaced, as in Japan in 1891, slight local changes in magnetic curves have resulted.

Mayor Schieren, of Brooklyn, has received the following unique letter: Mr. Schieren: Will you please interest yourself in this case. Mr. Dorgelow and Mr. Hankin, corner 5 ave and 11th st. S. Blyn have each of them roosters they commence before daylight and keep it up till 7 a m and many times during day also Mr. Moss cigar maker 3 doors further on ave their noise is fearful my wife is in poor health I am afraid of losing tenants who complain considerable will you send agent and examine he will the great nuisance it is. Kind enough to suppress my name for reason that you know it will make it very disagreeable for me.

The centreboard is said to have been the invention of one Jococks Swain, a boat builder of Seaville, 20 miles north of Cape May. He secured letters patent on it April 10th, 1811, signed by James Madison, President, and James Monroe, Secretary of State. Originally it was known as a "centreboard." This new movable keel was afterward called a "leaboard" through the efforts of certain builders, to evade the terms of Swain's patent, by cutting on one side of the stationary keel for the board. Though of so early an origin, the centreboad did not become widely popular till after 1850, or about the time the America took the famous cup at Cowes.

Several years ago the mother of a Mrs Beccard, who lives in Cincinnati, mysteriously disappeared from her home in Posen, and word was sent to her heirs that the estate had been nearly dissipated and the little left was in possession of Brockard Gardner, a son-in-law of the missing woman. A year ago Mrs. Beccard dreamed that she saw Gardner kill and bury her mother. She made inquiries by letter, and started an investigation that resulted in placing suspicion on Gardner, but there was no tangible evidence until a few weeks ago, when workmen engaged in excavating for a new building came upon a mutilated body, that was identified as that of the missing woman, and Gardner was arrested. The body was identified by two wounds which it was known the accused had inflicted. Mrs. Beccard has left for Posen to testify in the case.

Is a frog a fish? This is the problem which the officials of the Dominion Fishery Department have recently had to consider. Petitions were forwarded to the department from the inhabitants of Northumberland, Ontario, praying for a close season for frogs. A lucrative trade in the shipment of frogs' legs had been done in that country; but it was discovered that the very time when the frogs are spawning is one when the greatest havoc is wrought among them. Possibly a change will be made in the fishery laws so as to embrace frogs. The officers say that in their embryotic stage frogs are certainly fishes, but later on they take an amphibious character.

The Englishman's abiding affection for his four-footed friends receives another illustration. In Hyde Park, the holy of holies of the London park system, is to be found a dog cemetery. It adjoins the parkkeeper's lodge at Victoria Gate, and contains at present about 80 graves. The cemetery appears to be a private speculation of the keeper, who takes the fees, provides the tombstones and performs the duties of a sexton. The ordinary charge for an interment is five shillings; the monuments, of course, vary. The keeper shows one which is said to have cost five pounds. The Duke of Cambridge has two dogs buried there, and he seems to have started this public institution.

A Paris correspondent describes one of the oddest industries of that city to be found in the little shop in the Rue des Ecoles, which deals exclusively with the second-hand boots of the men who work in the sewers. These boots are furnished by the State, and come half way up the thigh, and each man is allowed a new pair every six months. When new they cost $9; when sold second-hand they realize the modest sum of 50 cents; but as at least 6000 pairs per annum are sent to the Rue des Ecoles, it makes quite a booming industry. The leather of these boots is, so to speak, tanned by the alkaline and greasy water in which the sewer-cleaners paddle, and they are eagerly sought for by the great Parisian bootmakers; for this leather, being at once tough and light, serves to sustain the curve of the Louis XV heel.

PATENTS

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There was never a time in the history of our country when the demand for inventions and improvements in the arts and sciences generally was so great as now. The conveniences of mankind in the factory and work-shop, the household, on the farm, and in official life, require continual accessions to the appurtenances and implements of each in order to save labor, time and expense. The political change in the administration of government does not affect the progress of the American inventor, who being on the alert, and ready to perceive the existing deficiencies, does not permit the affairs of government to deter him from quickly conceiving the remedy to overcome existing discrepancies. Too great care can not be exercised in choosing a competent and skillful attorney to prepare and prosecute an application for patent. Valuable interests have been lost and destroyed in innumerable instances by the employment of incompetent counsel, and especially is this advice applicable to those who adopt the "No patent, no pay" system. Inventors who entrust their business to this class of attorneys do so at imminent risk, as the breadth and strength of the patent is never considered in view of a quick endeavor to get an allowance and obtain the fee then due. THE PRESS CLAIMS COMPANY, John Wedderburn, General Manager, 618 F street, N. W., Washington, D. C., representing a large number of important daily and weekly papers, as well as general periodicals of the country, was instituted to protect its patrons from the unsafe methods heretofore employed in this line of business. The said Company is prepared to take charge of all patent business entrusted to it for reasonable fees, and prepares and prosecutes applications generally, including mechanical inventions, design patents, trade-marks, labels, copyrights, interferences, infringements, validity reports, and gives especial attention to rejected cases. It is also prepared to enter into competition with any firm in securing foreign patents.

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Our Young Folks.

DOROTHY AND THE FAIRIES.

BY T. B. C.

"DOROTHY! what are you doing?"

"Painting, papa."

"But did I not tell you, Dorothy, to keep out of the studio? I am very angry with you, and nurse will be angry too, when she sees the state of your nice clean pinafore. Come here at once!"

Dorothy put down the palette and brushes, and her face was rosy red as she obeyed, but reaching her father's side, she raised her blue eyes full of tears to his face and murmured plaintively—

"Dorothy forgot; Dorothy is sorry."

The studio was full of pictures, some quite small, and some so big that the little girl sometimes hesitated to approach them with their great figures looking so life-like. But there was one corner of the studio that she would not go near for the world, for there, in the shadow of a screen, stood a man in a broad hat with a big black feather in it, beneath the shade of which his eyes, round and glittering, seemed always to be blinking at her. She knew it was only her father's big doll, which he called the lay figure, but still she felt she would rather remain always a safe distance from it. Besides, was it not surrounded by things as mysterious as itself? See that rusty helmet with the face of a hobgoblin upon it, and another with a pair of horns sticking out of its top! And see that tall jar just behind. Might it not be one of those she had read about in "Ali Baba"? For all she knew, there might be the skeleton of one of those wicked dead thieves even now within it.

She did not mind the knives and swords hanging round, but she did mind seeing them taken down. Ugh! with what a horrible rasping noise they came out of their dusty sheaths! But she loved to sit and watch her father at his work; to see the beautiful pictures grow under his brush; for he was a great painter, and at the time our story opens he was painting the portrait of his little daughter to send to the Royal Academy.

He wiped the tears from her pretty eyes and soon forgave her.

"But my little girl must not forget again," said he, "or the paints might quite suddenly turn into goblins and eat her up."

A few days after this, Dorothy opened the studio door and peeped in.

"Papa, I've come to sit." But the room was empty.

So she entered and climbed up into the high chair near the easel on which her portrait was standing. It was nearly finished, and so delighted was she at the sight of it that she presently clapped her hands and sprang down, twirling round with a hop, skip, and a jump.

Crash!

What had she done? The palette and brushes, which had been hastily placed upon a stool, had leaped up as if in amazement at the noise, and now lay scattered all round her feet.

"Oh, dear!" she cried; "now they've made a mess on the floor!" and she stooped and lifted the big palette admiringly, slipping her little thumb through the hole in it, and placing some brushes in the same hand as she had seen her father do, then selecting one from the bunch she waved it before her, painting an imaginary picture, until at last there came a great desire to just make a real dab of paint on something, no matter what. Near by, there stood another easel holding a small new canvas, and its clean white surface soon attracted her roving eyes. She immediately approached it, and dipping her brush into the colors began to draw upon it the figure of a man—at least, such she intended it to be—but after a few minutes' work she was not altogether satisfied with the result, and stepped backwards, looking at it with her head tipped on one side, and her eyes screwed up.

At that moment the palette leaped suddenly out of her hand and landed with a crash on the floor, and as she stared at it in astonishment, all the paints upon it began to swell and rear up like a lot of snakes. Then a wonderful thing happened. With a loud hiss there shot up from each one a fairy of the same color, not pretty fairies, but savage looking creatures, with eyes of such fierceness that they were terrible to look upon.

Dorothy uttered a scream and turned to fly from the room, but in a moment they seized her by the hair, hands, and clothes, pulling and dragging her across the floor so that she stumbled and fell upon her knees.

"Wretched child!" shrieked Fairy Green, seizing her by the fingers and thumbs; "dost thou know we are come to punish thee for thy disobedience?"

"Away with her!" shrieked Fairy Yellow, with both hands pushing at the child's head; and banging her in the back, Fairy Blue also cried, "Away!"

"Yes, yes," muttered Fairy Black. "Away with her to punishment."

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled Fairy Red, rising above the group and waving her long arms. "Ha! ha! ha! Stuff her in a tube! Condense her! Stifle her!"

Dorothy screamed and resisted with might and main, but she could not get away from all those grasping hands, and in spite of her struggle they dragged her to the table on which stood the box of oil paints. Fairy Red then took a tube of terre-verte and unscrewed the top.

"Oh! oh! oh!" shrieked Dorothy, at sight of these awful preparations. "Let me go—let me go!" and she uttered wild cries for her father, but he heard her not, and nobody came to save her from the terrible fairies, who only laughed and appeared to be great amused at her distress.

"Condense her!" cried an awful voice.

In she went, feet first, and Fairy Red popped the lid down over her head with a bang, and screwed it tightly down. What were Dorothy's feelings then? Shut up in that dark narrow thing, unable to move, scarcely able to breathe, and her feet sticking in the gluey paint at the bottom! She tried to scream, but her voice was not as loud as the squeak of a mouse, for was she not now smaller than any mouse that ever lived? Oh! how she wished she had not been so naughty. Perhaps even at that moment her father was looking for her and calling her to sit for her portrait. But it would never be finished now, for she would not able to get out of the tube again, and she would die soon, and nobody would ever know what had become of her. She could not even cry any more, for fear of being drowned, for her tears were falling so thick and fast that the tube was filling up with them.

Suddenly somebody began to unscrew the top. Oh, joy! she would be saved after all then! Slowly, slowly the unscrewing continued, and in another moment the lid was lifted and a monstrous eye peered in at her.

"I am the lay figure!" chuckled a voice; and oh! what an awful voice it was. It made her squeeze herself still lower down into her prison instead of joyfully scrambling out as she at first thought to do. Then the great eye moved away and another took its place, while a loud metallic sound floated to her ears.

"I am the horned helmet!" said the owner of the eye; "Ha! ha! ha!" and with another clang it moved away for the next. "I am the skeleton of the jar!" cried the third voice, and it was accompanied by the loud rattling of dry bones. Then with shrieks of hobgoblin laughter the lid was clapped on again and screwed down as before. So they did move then. She always thought they did, and there could be no hope for her now, for they would be sure to take her into their dark corner behind the screen and hide her away. She screamed again and again, and sobbed and cried as surely no little girl had ever sobbed before.

"Dorothy!"

What was that? Somebody calling her—her father!

"Dorothy! Dorothy!"

If she could only speak and make him hear her. She uttered another loud scream, and as she did so, felt somebody pick up the tube and once more the top was unscrewed. Fearful that it might be the terrible lay figure and his companions she did not attempt to move. Indeed, she had no time to think of anything, for a finger and thumb were immediately pressed to the sides of the tube and she was squeezed out on to the palette with the remains of the paint. She felt so smothered with it that she could only cough and sneeze, and her eyes were so filled up with it that they would not open. She seized her pinafore and wiped them, but even then everything looked wrong, for she seemed to be sitting in a chair, and to be her ordinary size again; but of course her eyes were still full of paint, and that was the reason, she thought.

"Come, Dorothy; sit up just a minute."

She opened her eyes wide enough at that. She really was sitting in the big chair, her father standing near, painting her portrait, and there were no signs of anything unusual in the studio. There was no paint upon her anywhere, and the new canvas was as clean and white upon its easel as when she had seen it first. So she sat up, too astonished to say a word, but when the painting was over and she was allowed to get down, she crept silently to her father.

"Papa, how did you know I was in the tube?"

He looked astonished, then laughed and patted her golden curls.

"My little girl has been dreaming," he said.

"But, papa, didn't you say if I touched the paints they might turn into goblins?"

"And so they might, little one."

"Well, they did, papa, and they shut me in the terre-verte, and the lay figure peeped in at me, and the helmet, and oh! there is a nasty skeleton in the big jar!"

She began to cry again, and he took her in his arms and bore her out of the studio, telling her she had been dreaming an ugly dream while asleep in the chair, but she always felt sure that all those things really happened, and was always very careful never again to meddle with the forbidden things, for she had no desire ever more to meet with the terrible Paint Fairies.

BILLINGS ON CATS.—I hav studdyed cats clusely for years, and hav found them adikted tew a wild state. Tha haint got affecshum, nor vartue of enny kind; tha will skratch their best friends, and wont ketch mice unless tha are hungry.

It has bin sed that tha are good to make up into sassages, but this is a grate mistake. I hav bin told by a sassage maker tha don't kompare with dogs. There iz one thing sartin, tha are very anxious tew live. Yu ma turn one inside out, and hang up by the tale, and az soon az you are out ov sight he will manage to turn a back somerset and cum around awl rite in a fu days.

It is very hard work to loose a cat. If one gets carried oph in a bag bi mistake a grate ways into the kuntry, it wont sta lost onla a short time, but soon appear tew make the family happy with its presence. Old maids are very fond ov cats, for the reason, I suppose, that cats never marry if they hav ever so good a chance. There is one thing about cats I don't like: if you step on their tales by ackident they git mad rite oph, and make a great fuss about it.

There is another thing about them which makes them a good investment for poor folks. A pair ov cats will yield each year, without any outlay, something like eight hundred per cent. It is a very singular fack that cats don't like a mill-pond; I never knu one tew git drowned by ackident. They luv cream, but it seems tew be agin their religin tew teich soap. Cats and dogs hav never been able tew agree on the main question; they both seem tew want the affirmotiff side tew onat. I think if I could hav my way thare wouldn't be enny more cats born unless tha could show a certificate ov good moral karakter.

There is one thing more about cats which seems tew me tew be all affecktashum, and that is making sich a confounded noise under a fellar's winder o' nights, and then kall it musik. If I was to hav mi choice between a cat and a striped snake I would prefur the snake, bekase I could get rid ov the snake by letting him go.

There aint no sartin way to kill a cat. If you git one worked up into sassage, an' yu think yu are awl rite, jist as likell as no it will cum to and take off a whole lot ov good sassages with it. These are mi views about cats, rather hastily hove together, and if I aint sed enuff agin them, it is only bekase I lack the informashum.

LAW AND FACTS.—There is an old law on the statute-books of Illinois to the effect that in criminal cases the jury is the "judge of the law as well as the facts." Though not often quoted, sometimes a lawyer with a desperate case makes use of it. Such was the following case: The judge instructed the jury that they were to judge of the law as well as the facts, but added that they were not to judge of the law unless they were fully satisfied that they knew more law than the judge. An outrageous verdict was brought in, contrary to all the instructions of the judge, who felt called upon to rebuke the jury. At last one old farmer arose.

"Jedge," said he, "weren't we to jedge the law as well as the facts?"

"Certainly," was the response; "but I told you not to judge the law unless you were clearly satisfied that you knew the law better than I did."

"Well, jedge," answered the farmer gravely, "we considered that p'int."

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

The Sandwich Islanders' alphabet has only 12 letters.

The ordinary watch gives 116,144,000 ticks during a year.

Most workers in Switzerland labor eleven hours a day.

Window panes of porous glass are reported to be being made in Paris.

In 1893 177,753.36 miles of railroad tracks were laid in this country.

The vulture is said to fly at times at the rate of about 100 miles an hour.

The game of quoits is said to have originated with the ancient Greeks.

The annual taxes of the world aggregate the enormous sum of $4,350,000,000.

An authority claims that there are now more than 50,000 miles of ocean cable.

The roar of the lion can be heard further than the sound of any living creature.

The parent of all the varieties of apples is a sort of wild crab, and its home is in the Himalayas.

Artistic wood-carving seems at present to be one of the most fashionable accomplishments for women.

Two hundred women are employed by Edison in working at the more delicate details of his electrical inventions.

The flesh of serpent, when cooked, is said to have a pleasing appearance, but, sentiment apart, is too dry for good eating.

The larvæ of the dragon fly destroys myriads of larvæ mosquitoes, and in the adult state are a destruction to winged mosquitoes.

A 4-year-old child fell from a fourth-story window in New York, one day lately, and escaped with but a slight cut on its forehead.

Though hard, the diamond is one of the most brittle stones. A fall on a wooden floor will sometimes crack and ruin a fine specimen.

Paris is shortly to experiment with railways worked by compressed air. The new system is considered superior to the electric storage system.

The latest census report shows that there are more marriages in Brooklyn, in proportion to its population, than in any other city of the Union.

Theban mummies have been found containing evidence that in the days of the Pharaohs there were dentists who stopped decayed teeth with gold.

An enterprising firm in Palestine does a prosperous business by bottling water from the Jordan and selling it in various parts of the world, for use in churches.

The famous "Little Church Around the Corner," the Church of the Transfiguration, in New York, recently received a check for $95,000 on its collection plate.

In two years the number of drug stores in Massachusetts has increased from 1400 to 2500, and the number of people who take liquor medicinally has increased in like ratio.

It is said that in Maine there are 95 towns and settlements where no religious services of any sort are held, and more villages in Illinois without the gospel than in any other State in the Union.

The number of suicides throughout the world is 180,000 yearly, and is on the increase. The greatest number happen in June, the fewest in September, and nearly one-half between 6 A. M. and noon.

Trade unions have existed in China for 4000 years. The Celestial workman levies toll on every transaction according to laws laid down by his trade union, and without for a moment taking into consideration what his employer may consider proper.

The "barbe a la President" has already become popular on the Parisian boulevards. The new chief of the Republic, M. Casimir-Perier, wears no beard, but cultivates a somewhat English looking mustache. His livery is chestnut in color, while M. Carnot's was blue.

Opium was first smoked by the natives of Java. They mixed the drug with their tobacco, and from them the Chinese learned the habit. After a time the Chinese tried the opium alone, and the effect proved more pleasurable to them than when both ingredients were used.

Dueling in Russia has become so common that the Government has been compelled to decree a code of punishment. If a duellist kills an antagonist, it will cost him six years in prison; for severe wounding, the penalty will be three years; duel without injury, six months; provoking a duel, six weeks to three months.

William Hammond, a Sullivan county, Pa., farmer, keeps on his farm 400 dogs. In order to properly support this great canine army Mr. Hammond has a bakery and a meat-chopping machine, which in combination use up ten barrels of flour and half a ton of meat a week to make dog biscuits. The dogs are the property of New York, Brooklyn and Philadelphia sportsmen, and Mr. Hammond is only the keeper and trainer of the animals.

THE REBUKE.

BY T. L.

Breathe no more those vows unholy,
Speak no more of gems and gold;
Thou art noble, I am lowly,
And thy love would soon grow cold.

Go, and woo some high-born beauty,
One whose rank may equal thine;
Leave me to fulfil my duty,
Though in poverty I pine.

Learn to think that wealth was given
For some wise and noble plan;
Go, and in the sight of Heaven,
Live an honest, upright man.

BIRD SUPERSTITION.

Every morning in the market birds are purchased by the pious Hindoos that they may set them free. This is done as a work of atonement, in imitation of the Jewish scape-goat. The merit is not attributed to the Deity, but in a large measure to the bird itself, or from its attendant spirit; and hence birds of good or bad omen, especially kites and crows, are in much demand, and are regularly bought and sold for that purpose.

In many parts of England, in Germany, and in the north of Europe, there are numerous superstitions concerning the cuckoo, all of which, however, unite in ascribing to it oracular powers.

In the Maritime Highlands and Hebrides, if the cuckoo is first heard by one who has not broken his fast, some misfortune, it is believed, may be expected. Indeed, beside the danger, it is considered a reproach to one to have heard the cuckoo while hungry.

In France, to hear the cuckoo for the first time fasting is to make the hearer an idle do-nothing for the rest of the year, or to numb his limbs for the same period.

In Northumberland you are told that if you are walking on a hard road when the cuckoo first calls, the ensuing season will be full of calamity for you; to be on soft ground is a very lucky omen.

In Westphalia the peasants, on hearing the cuckoo for the first time, roll over on the grass, in order to ensure themselves against the lumbago for the rest of the year. This is considered all the more likely to be efficacious if the bird should repent the cry while the devotee is on the ground.

The Bohemians say that the cuckoo is a transformed peasant woman, who hid herself when she saw the Lord Jesus coming lest she should be obliged to give Him a loaf. After He had gone she put her head out of a window, and cried "Cuckoo," whereupon she was at once changed into the bird of spring, while her daughters, who had taken compassion on Him, were placed among the stars as the Pleiades.

The Bohemians also say that the cuckoo once had a crown on her head, till at a wedding among birds, at which the hoopoe was the bridegroom, she lent it him, and has never been able to get it back. This is the reason why the cuckoo is always saying "kluku," which means "you rascal." The hoopoe replies "idu, idu"—"I come, I come," but never comes.

An Albanian legend says there were once two brothers and a sister. The latter accidentally killed one of her brothers by getting up suddenly from her needlework, and piercing him to the heart with her scissors. She and the surviving brother mourned so much that they were turned into birds. He cries out to the lost brother by night "gjou, gjou," and she by day "ku, ku; ku ku," which means "where are you?"

In Worcestershire there is a common belief that the cuckoo will never be heard until Tenbury Fair, or after Pershoe Fair day, June twenty-six. In Shropshire the laborers will, on hearing the first notes of the cuckoo for the year, leave their work and make a holiday for the rest of the day. In other parts of England it is considered unlucky to have no money in your pockets when hearing the first notes of the cuckoo.

Another superstition led young women early in the morning into the fields, that they might hear the cuckoo's notes. If they succeeded they would take off their boot and look inside, and there find a hair the color of the man they were to marry.

It is a most common belief among the peasants in Norfolk that in whatever occupation you may be engaged when you first hear the notes of the cuckoo, that occupation will occupy most of your time during the ensuing year.

In the Cornish villages they believe that on first hearing the cuckoo, if the sounds proceed from the right it signifies that you will be prosperous, or, to use the language of the country, "you will go vore in the world;" if you hear it from the left ill-luck is before you. In Northamptonshire they turn the money they may have in their pockets and wish for something when they hear the notes of the cuckoo for the first time in the season. If the wish is within the bounds of reason it is sure to be fulfilled.

As the advent of the cuckoo finds the season backward or forward, so will the prospects of keep for stock and probably the rise or fall in prices of corn vary. Among the Danes, Mr. Marryat says, the following legend of the cuckoo is in existence: "When in the early spring-time the voice of the cuckoo is first heard in the woods, every village girl kisses her hand and asks the question, 'Cuckoo, cuckoo, when shall I be married?' And the old folks, borne down with the rheumatics, enquire: 'Cuckoo, cuckoo, when shall I be released from this world's cares?' As many times as years will elapse before the objects of their desires come to pass does the bird continue singing his note. But as some old people live to an advanced age, and many girls die old maids, the poor bird has so much to do in answering questions put to him that the building season goes by; he has no time to make a nest, and therefore his mate lays her eggs in the nest of the hedge sparrow."

In some parts of the world it seems to have been an article of belief that the cuckoo was one of the gods who took the form of the bird, and it was considered a crime to kill it. Its most singular quality in this superstitious lore—and this shows the universality of superstition—was the power of telling how long people would live, the faith of which is still preserved among the peasantry of many parts of England, France and Germany, and the north of Europe generally.

Grains of Gold.

Theory is the childhood of fact.

The worst company for some men is themselves.

Who makes a quick use of the moment is a genius of prudence.

The man who has a high opinion of himself doesn't know himself.

Discouragement is often pride wounded, though it resemble humility.

The one who nurses grief is not any wiser than the one who feeds a tiger.

No man has begun the battle of life until he crosses swords with himself.

Though a man without money is poor, a man with nothing but money is still poorer.

When tempted to do wrong, every man ought to remember that he is some boy's hero.

If we could look deeper into the hearts of people, it wouldn't be so hard for us to love them.

The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving.

If it were not so hard for woman to take care of herself there wouldn't be so many unhappy marriages.

If everybody's children were as good as their neighbors think they ought to be, the sun would never set.

Action and self-renunciation lead alike to happiness; for he who either acts or denies himself reaps the harvests of both virtues. Right action, undertaken heedless of consequences, is indeed renunciation.

Femininities.

Odd Fellows' lodges for women under 30 are being organized in England.

There have been but 115 divorces granted in Canada in the last 20 years.

Six hundred and eight women recently applied for a poorly-paid place as mail sorter in an English postoffice.

A mind must have for ballast the clear perception of duty, if it is not to fluctuate between levity and despair.

A young woman at Princess Anne, Md., died a few days ago from the effects of swallowing chewing gum.

A most profound philosopher remarks: There are some men who can't take home a beefsteak without believing they are taking their wives a present.

In Boston are the headquarters of the Ramabai Association, whose purpose it is to rescue child widows in India. This society is flourishing, and reports an income of $61,784.

Mlle. Paulina, of Holland, is probably the tiniest woman on the planet. She is 18 years old, weighs less than 9 pounds, and lacks 4 inches of being as high as a 2-foot-rule.

The test for symmetry is to turn a man with his face toward the wall. If he be perfectly formed his chest will touch it, his nose will be four inches away, his thighs five, the tips of his toes three.

Banks: "What do you think of the story about Jonah being three days inside of the whale?"

Tanks: "It's a good thing. I've given my wife worse excuses than that."

"Is it really true, as Miss Old Girl says, that she never married because her lover was lost at sea?"

"Yes; another girl cut her out of his affections on a trip across the Atlantic."

Miss Klumpke, the San Francisco girl who is attached to the Astronomical Observatory of Paris, is being warmly praised for her contributions to the work of getting out a new and exact map of the heavens.

Poor old Empress Eugenie! In a recently prepared official declaration here is how she described herself: Maria Eugenie, Countess de Pierrefond, widow; age, 67; born at Granada, in Spain; naturalized French.

Sally: "Ethel and I are so interested in you!"

Jim: "Kind, certainly; but why?"

Ethel: "We had our fortunes told. One is to marry you, and the other is to be bridesmaid."

Anxious wife, at an altitude of 500 feet, to husband, who is accompanying her on the return trip to earth after having been blown up at a steamboat landing: "John, we are coming down among strangers. Is my hat on straight?"

Husband: Do you know that every time a woman gets angry she adds a new wrinkle to her face?

Wife: No, I did not; but, if it is so, I presume it is a wise provision of nature to let the world know what sort of a husband a woman has.

Fashionable wife: "Did you notice, dear, at the party last evening, how grandly our daughter Clara swept into the room?"

Husband, with a grunt: "Oh, yes, Clara can sweep into a room grandly enough; but when it comes to sweeping out a room, she isn't there."

It is estimated that since the building of the famous Tower of Babel there have been 1500 distinct languages and 3000 colloquial, or 5000 different forms of speech. At the present time 500 of the primary languages are dead, leaving 900 spoken all over the earth, with 2500 colloquials.

The Empress Frederick shares with the Princess of Wales and the Duke of York a great love for lilies of the valley. Her late consort's favorite flower was the violet. The present German Emperor is most partial to the orchid, and the Empress gives her preference to gardenias.

A sharp advertiser, who offered for a small sum to supply women with cheap substitutes for hat pins, has been arrested in Boston for misusing the mails. He sent two rubber bands to each inquirer, with this advice: Sew one end to the hat and fasten the other behind one of your ears."

Everybody smokes in Japan. The pipes hold a little wad of fine cut tobacco as big as a pea. It is fired, and the smoker takes one long whiff, blowing the smoke in a cloud from his mouth and nose. The ladies have pipes with longer stems than the men, and if one of them wishes to show a gentleman a special mark of favor, she lights her pipe, takes half a whiff, hands it to him and lets him finish out the whiff.

The Civil Tribunal in Paris has just had to decide whether divorced people stand in any relation to each other, or whether they are simply like any two strangers. The question arose through the marriage of a divorced woman with her ex-husband's brother. Of course, if the divorce had completely effaced the first marriage, there had been no marriage within the prohibited degree. The Court, however, did not uphold this view of the case, and the woman's second marriage was declared void.

Masculinities.

It is not punishment but his deserving it that disgraces a man.

William Sumner, of Bayard, Neb., woke up the other morning to find he had a rattlesnake for a bedfellow.

C. P. Villiers, the father of the English House of Commons, is 92 years old, but still attends the House regularly and often speaks.

"Jones is a lucky fellow." "How?" "Got elected Coroner; fellow who ran against him dropped dead; Jones sat on him and made three dollars!"

A man named John Palmer, although 70 years old, jumped into the Raritan at Perth Amboy, and, after a severe struggle, saved a boy from drowning.

Noah Shanks, a Brownsville, Oregon, boy, got sick, as might have been expected, from his phenomenal feat of eating at a single sitting 17 bologna sausages.

The Ohio Southern Railroad has for its Superintendent Homer T. Dick, aged 23 years, probably the youngest railway superintendent in the railway line.

Two men knocked down and robbed a third on a street in New York, the other night, and then, becoming conscience-stricken, went to the nearest station house and confessed.

The Shah of Persia is a photographer of no mean skill. In his travels about his domain he carries with him a camera, which he uses on any bit of landscape striking his fancy.

There's a man in a little town about ten miles from Dallas, Texas, who is landlord of the only hotel, the storekeeper, the only lawyer in the place and the pastor of the only church.

A lad of 15 years has been before a New York police court charged with stabbing his father, beating his mother and sister, and deserting when an apprentice from the schoolship Richmond.

Distressed young mother, traveling with a crying infant: Dear me! I don't know what to do with this baby!

Thoughtful bachelor, in the next seat: Shall I open the window for you?"

General George R. Jessup received two letters at his residence in Marietta, Ga., the other day, which bore the post-mark 1850, and whose writers are dead. Where the letters have been all this time is a mystery.

Virtue is not always its own sole reward. James Haysman, a New York expressman, who found on the street a check for $20,000, payable to Russell Sage, took it to his office, and received a $1 bill for his honesty.

A farmer living about 10 miles from Wauseon, Ohio, the other day went to town and had a policy on his barn issued to him. The locomotive of the train that took him home set fire to the structure he had just insured.

A negro had a streak of luck while fishing in the Flint river, near Albany, Ga. His line became tangled in something, which proved to be a lady's gold necklace, which had evidently laid at the bottom of the river for many years.

A burglar broke into a man's house in New York the other night, and found himself in a room full of serpents, pets of the owner of the house. The reptiles got after the burglar, who fled in affright, leaving all his tools behind him.

A few nights ago Mr. Michael Dixon, of Poquonnock, Conn., was awakened by a burglar in his bedroom. A fierce struggle ensued, ending in the intruder being worsted. Then Mr. Dixon made the discovery that the burglar was his brother, whom he had lost sight of for some time.

Two men left a large case at a railroad depot in Memphis, recently. As they did not return, the case was opened and found to contain the mummy of a man, which, it is said, came from a mine in Norway. The body was 9 feet 1½ inches long, and was in a splendid state of preservation.

Atlantic City's "cowboy" preacher, in his sermon on Sunday evening, connected the death of a young man by a lightning stroke, on the beach in the afternoon, with Sunday bathing. On Monday afternoon he swam out too far from the beach and it took very lively work on the part of the life guards to get him in.

Ex-Judge Botkin, who attracted attention three years ago by holding court in Stevens county, Kansas, with a loaded Winchester on the bench beside him, and who formerly absorbed as much as ten ounces of whisky at a time without giving visible signs thereof, has become a zealous temperance exhorter, and is persuading hundreds to sign the pledge.

A well-known professor of natural science married recently and took his young wife to a meeting of a learned society. Another eminent professor of the same branch of learning took pity on the evident shyness of the bride, and came up to her; whereupon she, fishing for a little compliment, said: "I feel so out of place among all these clever people!" And he answered—gallantly, as he thought: "Well, you know, scientific men never do marry clever wives!"

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

For day wear a dress is made of a shepherd's plaid silk, a fashionable style. The skirt has a little frill round the foot, the bodice of white satin is covered with lace, having a full bag front, finished off with a narrow Swiss belt of the silk, a cross-cut band encircling the neck and finished with rosettes. The silk sleeves are of the bishop shape, with a cuff of white satin covered with lace. A full waistcoat of black brocade is introduced into a plain bodice of black foule with large revers edged with sequins, which fall over the large sleeves. Jet forms the trimmings to the revers on a black brocade made with a small belt formed of jet. The skirt is plain and has bows of black satin here and there. A simple little white gauze blouse is quite a triumph in its way, soft and adjustable to the figure with its full, soft falling front.

Fancy belts of ribbon or velvet are worn with buckles of every conceivable design. The openwork gold and silver buckles and the Rhinestones look the best on the white gowns, and they are made curved, straight, narrow or wide, to suit every one's taste. The sashes are made, not tied, and are fastened to the belt at the back of the waist. Two loops and two long ends of broad sash ribbon make a wash gown look dressy and pretty. Silk by the yard is sometimes used, doubled in half and carefully stitched together it looks well, but is not so graceful as the sash ribbon. The ribbon bow and ends used on many of the silk gowns are rarely over two or three inches in width, and the bows stand up very straight and stiff. Ribbon rosettes are also much the fashion. They are very ungraceful, but have a stylish effect, particularly on crepon gowns, their very stiffness contrasting well with the soft graceful material.

The revival of the waistcoat and flat plastron is another argument in favor of velvet.

At present velvet is currently used to face the turndown collars of all outer garments, from the serge yachting costume to the elegant "leather" cloth collet, which every fashionable holds in readiness to put on the first cool autumn days. At the same time a decided inclination is manifest to substitute velvet bows and rosettes for silk or satin in the trimming of dresses.

Piece velvet is generally used for this purpose, but not exclusively. Broad ribbon velvet backed with satin is made up into sashes and also into those frontal bows which fashion seems inclined to go on patronizing for some time to come. They are of different sorts, now made of two loops and a crosspiece only, now with the addition of ends, more or less long. Frequently the ends are shaped so as to grow wider at the extremities, when, of course, piece velvet is required.

These bows are usually black and may be worn with dresses of any color, either fixed to the front of the throat or to the bust. They are provided ready to wear by the magazins. Those in piece velvet are lined with thin silk.

Time was when a yachting gown was either of blue or white serge, made with a skirt and blazer, and had scarcely a mark of distinction except in the variety of shirt waists. This season, however, all is changed. The wool gowns may be of serge or covert cloth of any becoming or favorite color, with contrasting waistcoat or silk shirt waist; and they are varied on occasions with those of white or figured duck, made either in tailor style or in sailor suits. The last have bands of color—navy or light blue or red—on the full skirts to match the wide sailor-collar, deep cuffs, and belt of the sailor blouse. These are very useful and becoming; and so readily laundered that it is easy to keep them in that state of immaculate freshness which alone is pleasant to see.

A smart outdoor jacket for occasional wear is of black velvet, with white satin sleeves, embroidered all over in jet; and a charming cloak for a wrap, for day or evening, is a bright green and blue shot, entirely enveloping the figure, the cape collars trimmed with rows of narrow black velvet.

The lightest shade of lavender blue is the new color that promises to drive cerise and magenta from favor. It is called bluet, the French name of the German cornflower, and is the palest tint of that favorite flower, bunches of which with bluet chiffon trim black or unbleached straw hats.

Some of the new silk-warp fabrics brought out this year are in the beautiful magnolia and water-lily tints, which are even more delicate than primrose, beige, or apricot, and far more becoming than pearl or silver-white. These fabrics, so soft to the touch, and so attractive to the eye, owing to the mixture of silk with the finest of wool, and also to their delicate and peculiar finish, have the exquisite surface noticeable only in goods of this description. They include the fayettas, henriettas, clairettes, and also the sheer, lustrous India cashmeres, beloved by all French women, and they are especially adapted to the styles of the present, forming soft pliant folds, and suited alike to classic skirt-draperies, accordion pleatings, crossed bodice trimmings, shirred plastrons, and puffed sleeves.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Baked Salmon.—Select a thick piece of salmon and put it in the baking dish. Add half a cup of water and a teaspoonful of lemon juice. Cover the pan with another the same size, and bake in the oven for half an hour. Place the salmon on a hot platter. Rub a heaping tablespoonful of butter and one of flour together to a cream. Add gradually one cup or half a pint of boiling milk. Stir over the fire until it thickens. Take from the fire, add a tablespoonful of minced parsley, the crumbled yolk of two hardboiled eggs, a tablespoonful of lemon juice, half a tablespoonful of salt and a dash of cayenne. Serve the salmon garnished with potato balls and the sauce in a boat.

Cafe Frappe. Take one quart of cream, one cup of powered sugar, one tablespoonful of vanilla. Whip very stiff. Divide the cream into two equal parts; into one beat one-fourth of a cup of strong black coffee. Put the whipped cream into the bottom of the mould, hold the cream with the coffee in it over the mould, and pour it directly into the centre of the whipped cream, so forcing the white cream up around the sides of the mould. Pack in in salt and ice the same as ice cream and let it stand from six to eight hours in winter; longer in warm weather.

Eggs.—Eggs can be kept for years in lime water, made like common whitewash. A pine barrel or tub is the best thing to put them in. First make your whitewash, which must stand two or three weeks before using, or it will cook the eggs; then put the eggs into a barrel, and pour on the limewater. The lime settles around the eggs, and the water should stand over them three or four inches deep. Always keep water on the top, and they will keep for years, if desired.

To Wash Lawns.—Boil two quarts of wheat bran in six quarts or more of water half an hour. Strain through a coarse towel, and mix in the water in which the muslin is to be washed. Use no soap, if you can help it, and no starch. Rinse lightly in clean water. This preparation both cleanses and stiffens the lawn. If you can, conveniently, take out all the gathers. The skirt should always be ripped from the waist. According to Marion Harland these are best directions.

Hints to Ironers.—Garments to be ironed in cold starch should be immediately dipped in boiling water, and ironed as soon as starched. You will, in this way, have no trouble with flats sticking to the cloth. Another good way is to wet the starch with weak cold suds made from white soap.

Useful Receipt—Hundreds of lives might have been saved by a knowledge of this simple receipt—a large teaspoonful of made mustard, mixed in a tumbler of warm water, and swallowed as soon as possible, acts as an instant emetic, sufficiently powerful to remove all that is lodged in the stomach.

Rats.—Those whose houses are infested by that troublesome domestic animal, the rat, should heat plaster of Paris in an iron vessel until it is done boiling, then mix it half and half with Indian meal. It is said the rats will eat of this compound freely, and that it sets in their little stomachs and kills them, without the danger of poison.

A good furniture polish may be made by putting equal parts of spirits of wine, vinegar, and olive oil in a large bottle and shaking thoroughly every day for a week, when it will be ready for use. This polish should be applied to the furniture with a soft woollen cloth, and thoroughly rubbed in. If the furniture is very dirty it may be rubbed clean with a woollen cloth dipped in kerosene.

Essence of peppermint, applied with the finger-tips over the seat of pain, often gives relief in headache, toothache, or neuralgic pain in any part of the body. Care must be taken not to put it directly under the eye, on account of the smarting it would cause.

We read that if the head be washed occasionally with salt and water it will lessen the falling out of the hair. Salt added to the bath will be found almost as invigorating as an ocean dip.

Biscuits that have been softened by exposure will become crisp and fresh again by being heated in an oven a few minutes.

A glass of water containing a squeeze of lemon juice is a wholesome thing to drink the first thing in the morning.

To freshen leather chair seats, valises, bags, etc., rub them with well-beaten white of egg.

SAMPLES OF GUMPTION.

WE give a few unmistakable varieties of this article. The first relates to a gentleman, who, in a mixed assemblage, suddenly heard his name called from all parts of the house. Although unaccustomed to public speaking, he rose amid great applause, and said:

"Fellow citizens, I thank you for this kindly greeting, and as my rising has called forth such plaudits, I trust my sitting down will elicit no less substantial marks of your approbation."

The gumption of the gentleman gained him three hearty cheers, and it had quite as good an effect as if he had spoken ten minutes, which he probably might done had he anything to say.

Gumption is a prompt application of common sense—a never-failing resource. According to this definition, shrewdness, capacity and address are component parts. These qualities are particularly necessary in a lawyer, who is called upon to speak often in open court.

One of the leading members of the Suffolk bar once found that even eloquence, mighty and powerful as is its sway, was no match for the gumption of his opponent.

Our eloquent friend addressed the jury, one day, in a case of considerable pecuniary importance, and feeling in good health, he gave full play to his imagination, and so hid the merits of the case under the glitter of his beautiful imagery, and so charmed all hearers by his style, that the jury was carried away by his command of language and his beauty of expression. His brother lawyers congratulated him upon his efforts, and he sat down, thinking, as others did, that it mattered little what the counsel for the defendant had to say. He happened, however, to be a man of gumption, though not of eloquence, and rising from his seat, he said:

"May it please this Honorable Court, and you, gentlemen of the Jury, to allow me, before entering upon the legal merits of this case, in which my worthy client has great interests at stake, to compliment my learned brother, upon his brilliant and powerful argument, which he has just closed. It has had its effect upon you, gentlemen of the Jury; it has had its effect upon the learned Judges of this Honorable Court; it has had its effect upon the members of this bar, here assembled—but it has had no effect upon me."

There was a slight movement in the Court, at this candid expression of opinion, and all eyes were directed towards the young man, who had the boldness to make such a statement. He continued:

"And I will tell you, gentlemen of the Jury, why his eloquence has had no effect upon me. Yesterday I had the pleasure of being with my learned brother, the counsel for the plaintiff, on a fishing excursion in our harbor. You may imagine, that we employed hook and line, bob and sinker, to procure the fish with which we concocted our chowder. We did so, with the exception of my friend here. He came on board in the morning, gentlemen of the Jury, with white kid gloves on. If you have had any experience in the art of capturing halibut or cod, you will say that white kid gloves are not appropriate for such a duty. He did not take his gloves off during the day, I believe, nor did he take a line into his hand, but he caught many fine fish. You may wonder how it was done. I will tell you, gentlemen of the Jury. He walked to the side of our small craft, and addressed the fish in a strain of eloquence, unequalled since the days of Cicero, with the exception of his effort to-day. The fish listened, as you have listened, gentlemen of the Jury; they drank in the music of his eloquent lips, and so pleased were they, with his descriptions of the pleasures of being broiled and boiled and baked, that they jumped from the water on to the deck, and looked with admiration into the face of him, who, having the power to delude fishes, may have the power to fascinate you, and hide from sight the true merits of this case."

The Court was unable to stand this sally. The spell wrought by the eloquence of the counsel for the plaintiff was broken: the Jury paid attention to the merits of the case—thought of the fishes—and the young man whose gumption told him that he must first destroy the glittering effect of his opponent's argument, before he could hope for justice—heard the verdict of the twelve upright men, with great satisfaction.

It is the elevator boy that gives many a man a rise in the world.

Others People's Troubles.—How differently people bear trouble! Some—like a great tree whose roots are planted in firm ground—sway and bow indeed to the storm, but straightway the leaves shimmer, as of old, in the bright sunshine, and the tossing branches look fresher and more luxuriant than before. Others lie prone upon the ground, with scattered limbs and foliage, careless whether the passing foot spoil or spare what is left of drooping bud and blossom.

Now neither class may say to the other, Why do ye so? since, generations back, before they saw the light, the great question of tendencies and temperaments was settled for them; not unmodifiable, we grant, by education and Christianity, but still as uneradicable as transmitted eyes, hair, and complexion. None may with impunity lay a muffling hand on the sobbing mouth of sorrow. None may say your tears are unwise, and worse than useless; for a moist eyelid were better than a crazed brain.

When the bolt falls, which sooner or later strikes every man's house, how philosophically lookers-on reason about it! How practically unconscious are they, while gazing at the darkened windows of a neighbor's house, that the advancing finger of destiny is already pointed at their own, as they plan for happy years to come the future of husband, wife, child, brother and sister, as if for them there was immunity from dissolution and disruption! No acceleration of pulse, no heart-quiver when the funeral train passes by, or the sad face looks out from its frame of sable; for no sweet bright face is missing from their little band. No pained ear listens at their fireside for the light footfall that will never come. No street is avoided in their daily walks, which agonizingly suggests a floating form once watched and waited for there. Nor may the passing stranger, whose step and voice stir the troubled fountain of your tears, know by what personal magnetism he has evoked your dead, and claimed you to linger, and look, and feed your excited fancy, till the impulse to throw yourself on that strange heart and weep, almost sweeps away cold propriety.

Ah me! the difference, whether the hearse stand before one's own door, or one's neighbor's! And yet, how else could we all live on, playing at jackstraws, as we do day after day, while a momentous future, little by little, unrolls itself! How else would one have courage to go on planting what another hand than his shall surely reap?—and what pleasure would there be beneath the sun, if one sat crouching, and listening for the step of the executioner, or clasping wild arms of protection round the dear ones? Merciful indeed is it, that we can travel on in to-day's sunshine, trusting to our Guide to shelter us, when the storm shall gather and break over our heads. F. F.

Country Glimpses.—How charming are the little sunset groups one sees in the low doorways on a summer evening in a country village! The white haired old grandfather, with the curly two-year-old on his knee; the venerable grandmother, with her gray hair combed smoothly away under her clean frilled cap; the young couple, healthy and happy, each with a little pet by their side, or in their lap, while some young girl loiters around the flowerbeds in the pretty garden before them, fresh as the roses she is gathering. How innocently unconscious are they of this artistic family arrangement for the delight of the passing traveller! and how many faces, of which he has only a hasty glimpse, linger in his memory months, and even years after! Then again some old hay-cart comes lumbering by, with a young girl seated "in clover," and the fresh wind blowing brown locks from eyes that had better be covered, if hearts would be safe. The country is the place to make love in, there's no doubt about that; one is not on one's guard there against Cupid. He has an innocent way with him of loitering at stiles and hedges, and sitting carelessly down in barns, and under trees, as if mischief were the thing he never dreamed of, all the while he is weaving a net that Samson himself could never get clear of, though he struggled his mightiest. Managing mammas understand this. They know that a few weeks in the country, and a straw hat and muslin dress, will do more for Amelia Ann matrimonially than a whole season in town, with only stereotyped chances, and full of rival female claimants. They will tell you how hopeless seemed her case, till a summer trip suggested itself. It is shocking, of course, in mamma to marry her girls "for a living;" everybody knows that; but every day that passes over our heads is emancipating girldom from this necessity, by enlarging her opportunities for self-reliant occupations, and providing her possible solitary years with mental pleasures and employments, independent of interested marriages. F. F.

Bingo: "I'm going to bring my wife around to call on you to-night." Witherby: "That's right; but do me a favor, old man. Don't let her wear her new sealskin cloak. I don't want my wife to see it just now." Bingo (grimly): "Why, that's what we are coming for."

Not Lost.

BY F. N. Y.

HAVING often heard my aunt speak of George Mortimer, I asked her one day to tell me who he was. For some time she was unwilling to gratify my curiosity; but at length my mother persuaded her to tell me, saying, "that perhaps it would be a lesson, and prevent me from placing too much reliance on the charm of a pretty face:" I will therefore relate the story in her own words.

"One fine spring morning two young girls were seated at a table writing; the elder of the two, Lucy, a merry, laughing girl of nineteen, was just finishing a letter, in these words, 'I remain your devoted lover, George Mortimer.'

"This letter she passed to her companion, who might have been a year younger. After having read it, Edith, for so the youngest girl was named, copied it in a bold round hand; then, having directed it, these two merry plotters put on their bonnets and posted it.

"The next morning they were standing at the window, evidently expecting some one. They had not long to wait before Lucy discovered their expected visitor crossing the street. In one moment both the girls were seated, busily engaged at work, and when the door opened, one would have thought, by Lucy's pretended surprise, that Mary Spencer was the last person she would have expected to see.

"'Why, Mary, dear, what has brought you out so early this morning?' said Lucy; 'of course you have come to stay. How well you are looking! Take off your bonnet, and then we can have a chat.'

"These and other questions were asked before the new-comer had time to answer. When at length, she was seated, she told Lucy she wanted them to go home with her, adding that she had received a letter, and wanted Lucy to go with her to meet a new lover.

"'But I will read his letter to you,' said Mary.

"Accordingly, taking a letter from her pocket, she read aloud as follows:—

"'DEAR MARY,—Excuse the freedom of one who is a comparative stranger to you, and let my love and admiration plead for me. I have seen you several times, but have not dared to accost you. About a week ago I followed you home, and from an irresistible impulse inquired your name. I found that you were known as the lovely Miss Spencer. In vain I have tried to get an introduction to you, and at last I determined to trust to your kindness, and beg of you to meet me in Belgrave Square to-morrow, (Thursday,) at seven o'clock. Pardon my presumption, and grant my request.

'Your devoted lover,
GEORGE MORTIMER.'

"'There, Lucy! what do you think of that letter?' said Mary.

"'Think?' said Lucy, with difficulty refraining from laughter; 'why, I think the man an idiot to suppose you mad enough to meet him.'

"'Oh, Lucy! I was in hopes you would have accompanied me,' said Mary. 'I think he must be tall, dark, and romantic-looking, with black curly hair, soft hazel eyes, and about five or six-and-twenty.'

"'And I,' said Edith, 'picture him fair, with blue eyes, and rather a melancholy expression. I would meet him if I were in your place.'

"'I am sure you are both wrong,' said Lucy. 'You may depend upon upon it he is a little, ugly fellow, about forty; squints, has red hair, and perhaps an ornament in the shape of a hump on his back. My portrait is the most like, I am sure."

"'But will one of you go with me?' said Mary, impatiently, 'and then we can decide which of us is right.'

"'Not to-night, Mary,' replied Lucy; 'I am afraid George Mortimer is only a myth, or an adventurer; perhaps some one who wishes to have a laugh at your expense. Take my advice; stay with us and spend the evening. If he really admires you as much as he pretends, he will write again when he finds that you do not answer him.'

"Before Mary could agree to Lucy's proposal they were interrupted by the entrance of Lucy's eldest brother, a tall, handsome man, about five-and-twenty, although from exposure to a tropical sun he looked ten years older.

"Lucy hastened to introduce her friend, when Charles told them that he had taken a box for the opera that evening, and hoped they would have the pleasure of Miss Spencer's company. After some persuasion Mary consented, and despatching a note to her sister, at whose house she was staying, contented herself with the hope of a flirtation with Charles Lee.

"Mary Spencer was a pretty girl, but unfortunately she had been flattered by all her friends until she thought that every man was in love with her. Lucy Lee, knowing her foible, was too fond of joking to let such a favorable opportunity pass without teasing her; so, availing herself of the visit of her cousin, Edith Chambers, (who was almost as great a 'tease' as herself,) they laid their heads together and sent Mary the note which she had just read to them.

"During the evening Edith kept wondering if Mr. Mortimer had waited long; if Mary would have any more letters; and concluded with the wish that he had fallen in love with her instead of Mary. Lucy, on the other hand, did not fail to point out how much better it was for Mary to have got really a handsome beau like Charles, than one who might be ugly and ill-tempered like George Mortimer.

"Mary was fairly caught in the trap, and more than ever determined upon meeting Mr. Mortimer if he wrote again. When they parted she promised to let them know if she heard any more of her admirer. Charles, who greatly admired Miss Spencer, wanted to know who this Mr. Mortimer was. Edith was going to tell him the joke, but Lucy stopped her, and told Charles he was Mary's most favored lover.

"'The following morning Mary received another letter from her unknown lover, accusing her of cruelty and hardness of heart in not granting his request, and saying that he had waited two hours in hopes she would at least send him a message, and concluded with the fervent hope of seeing her the next day at five o'clock. Mary called on her friends, according to appointment, to tell them about the letter, and knowing that the two cousins were engaged, said that she would put on a thick veil, and have a peep at Mr. Mortimer, taking good care not to be seen herself. Edith applauded her resolution, but Lucy pretended to be shocked at it, well knowing she was using the strongest arguments in favor of Mary's keeping the appointment. After an hour's chat the friends parted. Lucy, having ascertained that the silly girl would try and see her supposed lover, took good care to send another note after she had left home, in which George Mortimer apologized for not being able to keep the appointment he had made, and hoped Mary would forgive his seeming rudeness, as it was unforeseen business that called him out of town. He gave an address in Gloucestershire for her to write to him, and anticipated the pleasure of seeing her on his return. Several letters passed between them, for Lucy, being aware of the contents of Mary's letters, always wrote as if they were received. At length she again proposed an interview, to which Mary agreed. The day after Lucy sent the following letter:—

"'MY DEAR MARY,—I am sorry you should take the joke as serious, but little thinking you would be silly enough to write, and still less meet an unknown admirer, I was tempted to carry the joke farther than I at first intended. Of course neither Edith nor myself thought you meant to go, or we should not have written the letters; but thinking it time to let you know the truth, I once more sign myself

GEORGE MORTIMOR alias LUCY LEE.'

"It is quite impossible to describe Mary's anger on the receipt of this letter. For some time she steadily refused to see Lucy; but one day meeting her and her brother Charles, Mary was unable to resist Lucy's merry apology, and she consented to accompany her home to tea."

"You forgot," said my mother, "Charles' share in the transaction."

"Mary, taught by experience that even a pretty face will not always gain love, still less retain it, and that although she had had many flatterers, had not a lover, became more amiable, and did not think that all she was told of her beauty was meant. Charles Lee, who really admired her, soon learned to love her; and Mary, having acknowledged that he was not indifferent to her, in less than a year became his bride.

"Years have passed. The merry light-hearted Lucy has become a serious woman, having met with many trials and much affliction. Her cousin Edith has gone abroad, but does not fail to inquire about George Mortimer when she writes to Mary. Charles, who learned how it was that Lucy styled George Mortimer Mary's accepted lover, sometimes laughs at his wife when he sees her and Lucy so united, and says that he believes Mary love George after all. Their eldest daughter bids fair to be the exact counterpart of Lucy, after whom she is named. But practical jokes sometimes do more mischief than we are aware of, and I am sorry to say our young Lucy shows as great a propensity for them as her aunt did. In short, my dear children, your Aunt Lizzie is the Lucy of her story."

"Did she write to you, mamma!" exclaimed two or three voices, and the children looked grave.

"Since your mother has told you, my dears, I may as well finish by telling you that in Edith Chambers you may behold your cousin Ellen Hunt. I know it was wrong to write to your mother as we did; but the lesson did me good. I might have continued vain and frivolous; then I should never have won the love of my husband; perhaps I should have allowed my vanity to lead me into mischief; who knows what might have been? It did me good, you see; so perhaps the lesson will not be lost on others.

TOM: "What was that you heard Mr. Sheldon say about your voice?" Edith: "That it is perfectly heavenly." Tom: "Heavenly?" Edith: "Yes. At any rate, Mr. Sheldon said I had an unearthly voice."

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Humorous.

THE LOST PAGE.

Upon the kitchen table with her work unfinished yet,
Sat Sarah Ann, intent upon a thrilling novelette.
The baker and the grocer's man knocked loudly, but in vain;
Then kicked the paint all off the door, and went away again.
The fire went out, the light grew dim, but Sarah Ann read on,
Intent upon the fortunes of Lord Algernon Fitzjohn,
Whose proud and wealthy father designed his son and heir
For the beauty of the season, the Lady Maud de Vere.
She loved him, but Lord Algernon, much to his pa's distress,
Disliked the Lady Maud, and loved a modest governess.
She came to where the beauty accidentally o'erhears
The wilful Lord proposing to the governess, who fears
She's unworthy of the honor, but she loves him as her life,
And will do her very best to make a true and worthy wife.
She still reads on, and as she neared the bottom of the page
She learned how Lady Maud became convulsed with jealous rage,
Forgot herself, and, maddened by the sounds of rapturous kissing,
Sprang upright—Sarah turned the leaf—the other page was missing!

—T. B.

Pot luck—poker winnings.

The present day—The birthday.

A chest protector—The trunk strap.

The lap of luxury—The cat's of the cream.

Heated discussion—A controversy by a furnace.

A man known by the company he keeps—a theatrical manager.

It is not true that a horse has six legs although he has fore in front and two behind.

Elderly suitor: "I have spoken to your mother, Helen, and——" Helen: "Oh, I'm so glad! Did she accept you?"

Ethel, ambitious: "What would you do if you had a voice like mine?" Maud, spitefully: "I'd try to put up with it."

Snooks: "There were very few people at the funeral of Doctor Soonover." Skaggs: "No wonder; hardly any of his patients have survived him."

He: "Will you marry me?" She, playfully: "Ah, dearest, what a risk you are running!" "He: "I know it; but I was always a reckless dog."

Smith, astonished: "Why, doctor, what made you move? You had such a large practice, and——" Doctor, disconsolately, interrupting: "Yes, but they all died."

Mistress: "I should like to know what business that policeman has in my kitchen every night in the week?" Cook: "Please, mum, I think he's suspicious of me neglectin' me work or somethin'."

Wife: "You say you shot this duck yourself, John? I can find no marks on it." Husband, who hadn't thought of that: "Well—er—my dear, the bird was very high up, you know, and perhaps the fright and the fall killed it."

Consumptive: "Yes, the doctor says I sha'n't live six months if I stay here. Is your section of Florida healthy?" Florida man: "Healthy? Half the people down there want to sell out and come north?" "Eh? Why?" "Tired of life."

"My dear sir, you have traveled in Africa. Do the African ladies suffer as much as we from the tyranny of man?" "Oh, no, the ladies have special privileges——" "How I long to be there!" "As I was going to say, at all the banquets the captives are always first eaten."

Brown: "What's all that row in the kitchen, Nora? Can't you pacify Robert and make him stop that infernal howling?" Nora, the cook, indignantly: "Young Master Robby pulled an oicicle aff the back fince, sorr, an' laid it undher the kitchen shtove, an' now he declares Oi shtole it!"

Little Johnny: "Tell us a story, dear uncle."

Uncle Wayback, from the West: "All right, children. You want a true story, I s'pose?"

Little Johnny: "No, tell us one of those fairy tales about cyclones, and grasshoppers, and things, that you were telling the company last evening."

"How much for the trip?" asked a tourist in Palestine of a boatman who had taken him to several points of interest in the Sea of Galilee.

"Ten shekels, sir."

"What!" exclaimed the traveler, "ten shekels? Why, that is an outrageous charge."

"Can't help it, sir. That's what folks have paid ever since the sea was here."

"Well," growled the voyager, as he handed over the money, "I don't wonder that Peter tried to walk it."

KILLED BY A SNAKE.—The latest story from Georgia is that of a 7-year-old boy named Wesley, who was crushed to death the other afternoon by a huge snake of some kind. "The boy had gone to the field with his father, and while the latter was at work wandered off a short distance and climbed a muscadine vine, as was his habit. On being unable to find his boy when he had finished his work, about sundown, the father went to the house expecting to see him there, but was informed by his wife that the lad had not been home. Feeling no uneasiness, Wesley, knowing the habit of his boy, went back to the field, which was on the edge of a dense swamp bordered with muscadine vines. By looking up in the vines he was not long in finding him, but when he called the boy failed to answer. After calling two or three times and receiving no answer the father shook the vine, and to his horror saw what he had supposed to be one of the branches of the vine that was supporting his son begin to uncoil. Realizing that his son was in the coil of a huge snake Wesley stood rooted to the spot, and before he could recover his senses the snake completely uncoiled and the boy fell to the ground, a distance of nine or ten feet. Wesley picked the child up and ran from under the vines to the clearing. There his worst fears were realized—the child was dead."

A TIME OF IT.—A bride at Newark had a hard time of it in getting married a day or two ago. First of all she insisted that she would only drive to the church in a new coach, and much time was lost in finding such a vehicle. Next, when the church door was reached, the bride was found in tears, and the cause was that, in her excitement, she had forgotten to put on her white shoes. As she refused to allow the ceremony to proceed until she had rectified this blunder, the party had to return to her home, quite a distance away. The correct shoes having been put on a new start was made, but, in entering the carriage, the bride slipped and sprained her ankle. This caused further loss of time. Once more the wedding party set out, but again there was a mishap, in crossing a railroad track, one of the hind wheels of the coach was wrenched off, and the bride thrown into the road. An effort was then made to induce the bride to take one of the other carriages in the procession, while the occupants proceeded to the wedding in a street car, but she refused, and seated herself on a doorstep until another vehicle was procured. This ended the chapter of accidents and the young woman was safely married.

OBEYED ORDERS.—"Bridget," said Mrs. Morse, instructing her new maid, "when a lady comes to call upon me, you must hand her this tray and bring her card upstairs to me."

"Yis'm," replied Bridget promptly.

The next afternoon Mrs. Morse was surprised by the appearance of Bridget, bearing a card in her hand.

"Why, Bridget," she remonstrated, "didn't I tell you yesterday to hand the little silver tray to the callers?"

"Yis'm," replied the smiling maid, 'an' I did hand it to her, an' it's herself was unwillin' to take it; but whin I tould her it was my mistress' ixprise orthers, she give in, quite mild an' pleasant like. You'll find it safe wid her down in the drawing-room, ma'am."

And sure enough Mrs. Morse, when she had made a hasty descent, found her visitor holding the salver, while her mouth was twitching with amusement.

"I didn't dare refuse it," she said meekly, "as long as Bridget was so urgent!"

BEDS IN RUSSIA.—Not until comparatively recent times have the inhabitants of Russia known the use of beds, excepting in the case of the luxurious patricians who could afford them. The peasants slept on the large ovens to be found in nearly every house, while the soldiers were provided with a sort of cot without bedding. The middle classes and the students, on the other hand, contented themselves with wrapping a blanket round them and lying down near the primitive-looking stoves. Not long ago beds were introduced into the boarding schools which abound in Russia, and now their use has become rather general. As is customary in this absolute monarch, the introduction of these articles of comfort had to be brought about by a special edict from the Czar; and, as a matter of course, the servile schoolboys and others, who have been allowed to use them by royal behest, naturally look upon his Majesty as a great benefactor.

TAKEN IN.—There was a celebrated pigeon-shooter. He was an excellent shot; but, owing to defective vision, he shot indifferently when he had no glass in his eye. There was a great match, and he was there, glass in eye. It may be that he took sweet counsel with friends; it may be that, like the Irishman, he was too clever to let any one into his secrets, and conspired by by himself. But he stepped forward to take his place, and just as he raised his gun, his glass fell from his eye, struck the lock, and was smashed. He used the worst of language, but said that he should shoot nevertheless. Betting instantly and largely altered, and heavy odds were laid against him; which odds being taken, he coolly took out another glass, and slew all his pigeons.

WHEN HE HUNTS.—When the German Emperor goes hunting he arrays himself in such gorgeousness that the game ought to be proud to fall before so magnificent a conqueror. His hunting costume was designed by himself, and he is said to be so much taken with it that he omits no opportunity of wearing it. It consists of a bluish gray tunic with a short cloak of the same material, both garments having green facings and broad epaulettes. The emperor has round his waist a broad belt of green leather from which he hangs a huge hunting knife, the handle mounted with the imperial crown of gold. He wears very high lacquered boots, gold spurs, and a Tyrolese hat of gray felt, edged with green and adorned with an enormous plume of feathers, which quivers at every step.

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It must be understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

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